

# CHILD LIFE AND LITERATURE

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## PREFACE

The aim of this book is to call the teacher's attention to the choice of material in literature best suited to the nature and needs of elementary school pupils. To this end a general survey is made of the field of child psychology, and a course in reading and literature is developed in harmony with the dominant mental characteristics and natural interests of children.

It is gratifying to notice a tendency on the part of educational authorities to enlarge the school curriculum in literature. School readers alone must fail to interest children in reading. Complete units should be presented instead of extracts. Every phase of child life should be reflected; and all material should possess true literary merit.

In the chapters on choice of literature selections, an attempt has been made to be as definite and specific as possible without being dogmatic. I have by no means exhausted the available supply of suitable material; I have endeavored rather to point the way to the Elysian Fields of literature. The principles laid down are in general accord with the course of study in reading and literature for the Horace Mann Elementary School, Teachers College,

Columbia University. This outline is therefore included in the appendix.

The chapters on method enunciate a few basic principles but formulate no exact rules of procedure. Literature is such appetizing and wholesome soul food that artificial stimulants in the form of pedagogical devices appear to be superfluous.

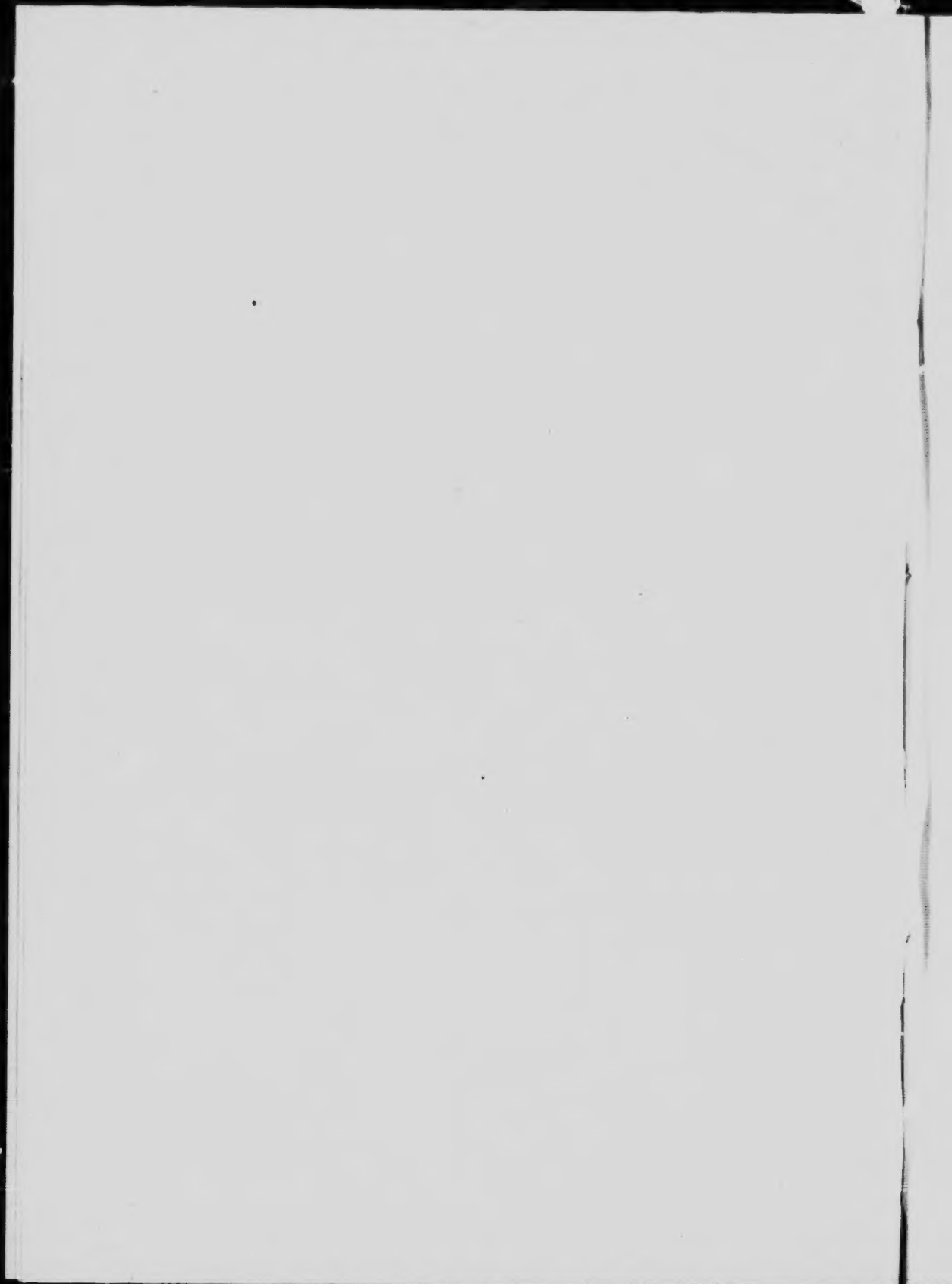
The book is written primarily for teachers in training. A thorough course in a Normal School or Teacher Training College should lay the foundations for the teacher's work. But the workshop is the classroom. There the teacher solves his problems, and there, if anywhere, he works out the true relation between the science of pedagogy and the art of teaching, and there, I trust, he may receive some help from a perusal of the following pages.

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## CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. The Meaning of Literature and its Place in Education .....	7
II. The Primary Pupil: his Natural Tendencies, Tastes, and Interests .....	19
III. Primary Literature .....	37
IV. The Pre-Adolescent Pupil: his Natural Tendencies, Tastes, and Interests .....	63
V. The Pre-Adolescent Pupil's Reading .....	76
VI. The Teaching of Reading .....	91
VII. The Teaching of Literature .....	116
APPENDIX	
A. A List of Primary Memory Gems for Teachers' Reference .....	131
B. Outline of Work in Reading and Literature, from the Curriculum of the Horace Mann Elementary School, 1917 .....	147



# CHILD LIFE AND LITERATURE

## CHAPTER I

### THE MEANING OF LITERATURE AND ITS PLACE IN EDUCATION

Before attempting to discuss the value of literature as a means of elementary school education, it may be well to specify in a general way what is meant by literature, and what is meant by education. There is no dearth of definitions of these terms. Both were defined by Plato in *The Republic*, and modern contributions have little to add to his discussions.

Education is Life; not preparation for complete living, but living itself. "I am come that ye might have life," said the Great Teacher. Facilities for the realization of the full and abounding life of a child comprise the total machinery necessary for the education of that child, and anything additional is not only superfluous, but injurious. Children may be choked as well as starved. The child lives in a growing, spiritual environment, and his education consists in harmonizing himself with this ever-enlarging environment. The primary pupil lives in a different world from the pre-adolescent, and the primary teacher will do well to guide her pupil through the life-giving material natural to the needs of a primary pupil, while the teacher in the senior

grades should realize that she is dealing with a different child and a different environment.

All material for the instruction of children should be viewed by the teacher from the standpoint of the growing life of the child. What has this problem in arithmetic, this exercise in composition, or this selection in literature to contribute to the development of my child? And how may I place this instrument in his hands that he may use it to best advantage to himself? These are the questions continually facing the teacher. No instrument of education has value in itself. Music is not included in a school curriculum that the pupil may become a musician; the purpose of art is not to make artists, nor the purpose of agriculture to make farmers. This fact was pointed out by Plato, once for all time. Why do teachers fail to realize it? Why do we continue to adapt the child to the task; or worse, fail to see the child in our anxious concern for the task? What is there sacred about arithmetic, or history, or literature, that we should worship these things and sacrifice to them the lives of little children? They are in reality mere instruments, tools which the teacher uses in the process of stimulating and directing the development of child life.

Education, then, is the ever-enlarging process of complete living. A more detailed definition would involve an inquiry into the meaning of life itself, which would carry us too far afield for the present discussion. It is quite possible that our examination into the meaning of literature



may throw some light on the subject, for the aim of this chapter, and in fact the aim of the book, is to point out to the teacher the valuable contribution which literature has to offer towards the realization of the true aim of education.

Our immediate problem, then, is to find a working definition for the term, literature. One thing is certain: all writing, even straightforward, logical writing, correct in grammatical structure and conforming to the canons of good taste, is not necessarily literature. The dictum, "It is written," still carries the authority of tradition, and the average reader is prone to over-estimate the value of opinions expressed in print. Science, history, biography,—useful information in all departments of life's activities, cannot, in itself, be classified as literature; for information is not the aim of this subject, accurate and useful though the information may be.

Literature, in the sense in which the term is used in the following pages, is one of the fine arts. President Woodrow Wilson refers to it as "Mere Literature." I like the expression in spite of its subtle irony, or perhaps partly because of it; for the reason chiefly, however, that it eliminates any idea of the utilitarian or purely informational. The French "*belles-lettres*" conveys the same idea and is probably a more dignified term.

Perhaps the best way of arriving at an understanding of the meaning of literature, as art, is to inquire into the nature of art itself. The true artist, whether painter

or poet or novelist, is not concerned with things as they are; his art does not consist in literal representation, but in something infinitely deeper and more beautiful. For example, the camera provides me with a literal representation of a landscape, or the features of a friend. But how different are the productions of a Corot, or a Reynolds! The difference is that the artist sees beneath the appearance of things and gets a glimpse of reality itself. "How true to nature!" or "How true to life!" is not the highest recommendation of a picture or a novel. "Art is art because it is not nature," says Goethe.

Neither Shakespeare's historical plays nor Scott's historical novels may be relied upon as history. They were not written for that purpose. They are "mere literature." History bears to them somewhat the same relation that the painter's model bears to the creation of his imaginative genius. That is, the historical incident served as a model through which the artist was enabled to picture life itself.

This is the peculiar power of the artist, that he sees reality; he apprehends things, not as they are, but as they should be, and the object or event is merely a model or a medium through which his soul comes into harmony with the ideal. "He is stirred by the tone and incident of a landscape, or by the force or charm of some personality; and he puts brush to canvas. He apprehends the complex rhythms of form; and the mobile clay takes shape in his fingers. He feels the significance of persons acting and reacting in their contact with one another;

and he pens a novel or a drama. He is thrilled with the emotion attending the influx of a great idea; philosophy is touched with feeling; and the thinker becomes a great poet."\*

A psychological analysis of the artist's mind, were such a thing possible, would reveal a keen perception, and an extraordinary power of constructive imagination, it is true; but the significant factor would be that for him every state of consciousness is accompanied by a strong emotional tone. Some one has said that art is born out of emotion. It is in the feeling of joy and exultation which accompanies the perception of the true meaning or ultimate purpose of the common things in the world about us, that art has its birth. If this divine relation between mind and matter may be termed appreciation of the beautiful, then art is the skilful representation in concrete form of that which is beautiful. The artist is the man who has the power to see the ideal in the commonplace; whose emotional nature is inspired thereby, and who has the gift of representing his experiences in permanent form. These three qualities underlie all art; and art is great in proportion as these elements attain to perfection.

A few examples, taken from literature, may serve to illustrate the thought of the previous paragraph, and should constitute sufficient elaboration of the definition of literature as a form of art.

One thinks of Peter Bell, who could sin against common

\*Noyes: *The Gate of Appreciation*, Chap. VII.

sense by raining blows on the back of a poor beast, so fagged as to be oblivious even to blows.

"He roamed among the vales and streams  
In the green wood and hollow dell;  
They were his dwellings night and day,  
But nature ne'er could find the way  
Into the heart of Peter Bell.

In vain through every changing year,  
Did Nature lead him as before;  
A primrose by a river's brim  
A yellow primrose was to him,  
And it was nothing more."

But to Wordsworth, the creator of Peter Bell, a tuft of primrose was

"A lasting link in Nature's chain,  
From highest heaven let down!"

In it he saw the plan of the universe and worshipped God.

And one thinks also of Tennyson's *Flower in the Crannied Wall*,—not a thing of beauty, like a primrose by a river's brim, but a half-starved and deformed bit of vegetation, barely able to survive in the struggle for existence, and yet to the poet it was a spark of the Divine, for it was living. Here we have pictured two extremes; the poetic soul, on the one hand, and on the other, the man of coarser clay,—a veritable brute, because devoid of imagination and emotion, which are the essential soul qualities of the artist.

Passing now from the artist to the nature of his art, let us illustrate its qualities by placing side by side two poetic

interpretations of the same subject; one by a true poet, and the other by a writer of verses. The subject is Mother Love. Eliza Cook no doubt loved her mother as truly as did William Cowper. She knew, as so many know, the sense of unutterable loneliness which comes to one bereft of mother's presence, and she looked upon the old arm-chair as a sacred thing, because it stood for her as a symbol of mother herself. And when Cowper came unexpectedly upon his mother's picture, he no doubt experienced similar emotions. But what a difference in the two poems inspired by the same subject! One is nearly doggerel, while the other is pure poetry. A short quotation from each will make this fact so clear that he who runs may read:\*

A—From *The Old Arm-Chair* by Eliza Cook.

"I love it; I love it, and who shall dare  
To chide me for loving that old arm-chair?  
I've treasured it long as a sacred prize,  
I've bedew'd it with tears and embalmed it with sighs;  
'Tis bound by 'housand bands to my heart;  
Not a tie will break, not a link will start.  
Would you learn the spell? A mother sat there.  
And a sacred thing is that old arm-chair."

B—From *On My Mother's Picture* by William Cowper.

"O that those lips had language! Life has passed  
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.  
Those lips are thine—thy own sweet smile I see,  
The same, that oft in childhood solaced me;

\*See *The Rudiments of Criticism* by Lamborn.

Voice only fails, else how distinct they say  
'Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away!'

This is an extreme example, to be sure. - Someone may even argue that Eliza Cook did not write poetry. Yet, not many children pass through the elementary school grades without having to memorize *The Old Arm-Chair*; in spite, too, of the fact that the subject itself bears little relation to the actual experiences of public school children.

A line from Longfellow, and one from Wordsworth, descriptive of the stars, will probably serve as a better illustration, for both have the qualities of poetry. Longfellow writes:

"Silently, one by one, in the infinite meadows of heaven,  
Blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-nots of the angels."

It is a pretty picture, and daintily expressed; but it lacks the depth and grandeur to which Wordsworth attains in three words:

"The stars, the silent stars!"

Our illustrations, so far, have been taken from the field of poetry; but the same principles naturally apply to prose literature, as well. Whether it be the little nursery story—fable, myth, or fairy-tale—or whether it be the novel or the drama, its function as literature is to present concrete examples of the real meaning and purpose of life; to portray clearly and convincingly the immutable laws of God, as they are reflected in the heart of man.

"I fancy," says Plato in *The Republic*, "that we shall say that in what they tell of men, poets and makers of stories

are wrong when they say that many unjust men are happy, many just men miserable, that injustice is profitable if it be not detected, and justice the good of another, but a man's own loss. I fancy, too, that we shall forbid them to make statements of that kind, and shall order them to make songs and stories to the contrary effect."\* So Plato argues that the first duty of a state is "to set a watch over the makers of stories, to select every beautiful story they make and reject those that are not beautiful." "And we must speak to our poets," he continues, "and compel them to impress upon their poems only the image of the good, or not to make poetry in our city. And we must speak to other craftsmen (Plato realized that literature is art) and forbid them to leave the impress of that which is evil in character, unrestrained, mean and ugly, on their likenesses of living creatures, or their houses, or anything else which they make. He that cannot obey must not be allowed to ply his trade in our city."

A review of the plot of any true novel will illustrate this principle. Consider, for example, Tolstoi's masterpiece, *Anna Karenina*, one of the greatest novels ever written. The whole of life is revealed in this story. We see the happy family life of Levin and Kitty contrasted with the careless domestic relations existing between Ablonsky and his wife; and with the illicit love of Anna and Veronsky. We see the folly of fashion, the emptiness of ambition, the misery of wealth, the tragedy of a wasted life. There is

\*Plato: *The Republic*; Books II and III. (Lindsay's Translation)

philosophy, religion, politics, economics, sociology—all woven artistically into a complex weave, with never a false thread. There is no decoration and no veneer. The results of good and evil are impartially portrayed; the good invariably triumphs, while evil is purged in the fiery furnace of pain and remorse. The evil-doer may gain our heartfelt sympathy for his suffering, but nevertheless we know that

"The moving finger writes, and having writ  
Moves on; nor all your piety nor wit  
Could lure it back to cancel half a line,  
Nor all your tears wash out a word of it."

One cannot read the novel without inwardly repeating Tolstoi's quotation at the beginning of the first chapter:

"Vengeance is Mine; I will repay."

The death of Nikolai is as touching as the suicide of poor Anna. The reader has compassion for them both; but he sees in their fate the workings of the immutable laws of God, as truly as he does in the happy peaceful lives of Levin and Kitty. He realizes that "God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting."

If education is the process of complete living;—"self-realization," to use the Froebelian term, and if the purpose of literature is to teach life, then what can be more essential



to the education of a child than *mere* literature! The child who has formed the reading habit, and whose literary taste has been cultivated by feeding upon the best that has been written by the masters of all times and all lands, for literature is universal, may well be said to have received already a fairly liberal education.

It is profoundly to be regretted that such desirable conditions seem to be removed almost beyond the possibility of realization under present-day systems of education. The fault does not lie in the nature of the pupils, nor so much in the quality of the teaching; for literature is such appetizing and wholesome soul-food that artificial stimulants in the form of pedagogical devices are superfluous and unnecessary. All that is needed is that a rich and varied diet shall be placed before the pupil—material in harmony with his natural tastes and interests, his intellectual capacity, and moral development,—and that he be invited to partake of the feast. Existing systems of education fail to take cognizance of this simple fact. Unrelated, stale fragments, mere crumbs, are spoon-fed to children in the form of school readers and authorized literature selections, consisting frequently of extracts from poems and stories which have been ruthlessly mutilated by makers of school curricula with no apparent realization of the fact that a poem or a novel is a living unity, and that to dismember it is to kill it. This is bad enough; but when the material is so overlaid and burdened down with notes and explanations and hints for teaching, supplied by expert critics, that the teacher can

scarce get a glimpse of it, let alone taste its original flavor, how can the children be expected to feast upon it with joy :

#### BOOKS OF REFERENCE

##### *A—On the Meaning of Education*

- Adams: Evolution of Educational Theory.
- Butler: The Meaning of Education.
- Henderson—Text Book in the Principles of Education.
- Horne: Philosophy of Education.
- O'Shea: Education as Adjustment.
- Plato: The Republic.
- Spencer: Education.

##### *B—On the Meaning of Literature*

- Arnold: Studies in Criticism. (The Study of Poetry is particularly recommended.)
- Bates: Talks on the Study of Literature.
- Burke: Essay on The Sublime and Beautiful.
- Coleridge: Biographia Literaria.
- Emerson: Essays—Art; Books; Poetry and Imagination, etc.
- Gayley and Young: English Poetry, Its Principles and Progress.
- Lamborn: The Rudiments of Criticism.
- Laurie: Lectures on Language.
- Noyes: The Gate of Appreciation.
- Plato: The Republic.
- Ruskin: Sesame and Lilies (Lecture I).
- Whitcomb: The Study of a Novel.
- Vaughan: English Literary Criticism.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PRIMARY PUPIL: HIS NATURAL TENDENCIES, TASTE AND INTERESTS

The first requirement of literature as a means of education is that it shall possess real literary merit; that is, it shall be *art* in the truest sense of the term. The next requirement is that the choice of material shall be in harmony with the pupil's needs, his natural tendencies, tastes, and interests, his mental capacity, his emotional nature and moral development. The word "pupil" is used in the singular to emphasize the fact that, while instruction is given to children in classes, the learning is always done by individuals. No two individuals in a class will respond in exactly the same manner to the same selection in literature. In fact, it is quite possible that one child may be bored by a story which is of real interest to another pupil in the same class. Such a condition, however, is an exception to the rule and should not worry the teacher. The self-evident solution is to relieve the bored pupil of his irksome task, and provide him with reading material which is in harmony with his interests. But the heart-breaking fact remains that patient, conscientious, hard-working teachers frequently fail to obtain any response from a class as a whole to the presentation of a selection in literature, because it is not in

harmony with the dominant characteristics that belong to children of that age. In such cases, though the selection may be of high literary merit, may have struck a responsive chord in the soul of the instructor, yet, if it brings no response from the pupils, the recitation has been a sheer waste of time, in the sense that the desired end has not been realized. It has been worse than a waste of time; it has been positively injurious in that it has been viewed by the pupils as a disagreeable task, and hence has contributed towards making impossible a realization of the chief purpose of teaching literature in schools, which is to develop the reading habit. It is impossible for a disagreeable action ever to become automatic; and habits are easily formed in proportion as practice is accompanied by resultant satisfaction.

The aim of this chapter is to call the teacher's attention to the dominant mental tendencies and natural interests of children in the primary grades of the elementary school. As Rousseau pointed out in the *Emile*, a century and a half ago, the child is by no means an adult in miniature, but physically and mentally a different being. Rousseau saw four well-defined stages in development. His error consisted in supposing that infancy could be marked off by a line from childhood, childhood from youth, and youth from manhood; and that each of these successive and almost independent sections of life should receive educational treatment peculiar to itself and different from all others; whereas in reality child development has certain well-defined

stages, but, like the growth of a plant, the continuity of development is never broken. Each stage passes gradually and imperceptibly into the next stage. Rousseau's theory was: reaction against the educational doctrine of the day, which completely ignored the rights of childhood, which treated children of seven years of age as little adults, and required from them the conduct befitting adults. He saw the artificiality and unfairness of such treatment, and in his protest against existing conditions, he naturally went to the other extreme. His work, however, has justly been called the Gospel of Childhood, for it was the first to call serious attention to the natural characteristics of child life, and to attempt to base upon these the material of instruction best suited to develop the possibilities latent in the child. Modern experimental psychology has expanded and corrected Rousseau's observations; and during the last quarter of a century a new science has evolved—the science of child-study. Under the leadership of G. Stanley Hall, James Sully, Kirkpatrick and others, every phase of child life has been investigated with scientific thoroughness, until to-day we have a wealth of accurate information about children which should form the natural basis for the choice of material in any subject of instruction, and for classroom practice generally. In its early stages child-study consisted largely in the close observation of individual children, beginning with Preyer's study of his son. Later the principle of group-testing was introduced and educational tests and measurements were so standardized, that to-day psychologists measure the

intelligence of children and prescribe suitable material for their education with some approach to scientific accuracy. It is upon such data that an attempt is made in the following pages to base the selection of material in literature for the education of children in the elementary schools.

In order to avoid Rousseau's error of being too dogmatic and extreme in the view of child life as falling into four distinct stages with well defined boundaries, reference will be made merely to normal children properly classified in the primary grades, on the one hand; and on the other hand, to children in the intermediate and senior grades, recognizing the fact that there is a gradual transition from the one stage to the other. This chapter deals in a general way with the child from five to seven years of age; the period generally known as later infancy. A later chapter discusses the characteristics of children from about nine to twelve or thirteen years of age; the pre-adolescent period. The period of early adolescence, which begins with puberty and extends to the seventeenth or eighteenth year is, properly speaking, the high school period, though little cognizance seems to be taken of this fact by those who formulate school curricula on the basis of eight years in the elementary school and four years in the secondary school. A more rational division, from the standpoint of child-study would be six years in the elementary school and six years in the secondary school; the transition from the one school to the other coming at about the beginning of the period of early adolescence.

In early infancy the child's world is, in the expressive language of Professor William James, "one big, blooming, buzzing confusion." But he makes great strides in the process of getting acquainted with his environment; testing things through his senses, continually experimenting, building up concepts, and forming judgments. It is a mistake to suppose that infants do not think; but it is perhaps a greater mistake to suppose that little children are capable of abstract reasoning. The child at six years of age enters school with quite a store of experiences, but these experiences are limited largely to the external, concrete world about him, and are not well systematized. Professor Lange compares these six years to the six days of the creation, and states that a six-year-old child has already learned far more than a student learns in his entire university course. But Dr. Stanley Hall warns the teacher that, though concrete experiences have been accumulated in vast numbers, and the beginner at school is by no means a *tabula rasa*, yet the presumption of too much knowledge is an equally dangerous mistake; hence the value of a careful study of the contents of children's minds on entering school. As the result of such an investigation Hall finds that children have learned and experienced far more than they can put into words, and that their concepts of familiar objects show an astonishing lack of clearness.

It is the teacher's duty to help the primary pupil to clear up his stock of vague concepts, and to give them lucid expression in language. There are not two steps involved

in this process. "Things before words," is an impossible situation; for "a thought is not born until it is expressed in language." On the other hand, glib expression does not necessarily mean clear thinking, but very often the reverse. Things *and* words, or words full of definite meaning to the child, is what is required. Not only will the primary teacher aim to clarify her beginner's thoughts and language, but she will help him to add to the store which he has already acquired, by bringing him into contact with new experiences, which, however, must bear definite relation to his past experiences: they will mean nothing to him.

So much for the pupil's information when he enters school. A knowledge of the mental equipment by which he builds up his stock of experiences, and through which the teacher must work to enlarge his store, is even more essential. It is more important that the teacher be acquainted with the real nature of her pupils than with their intellectual accomplishments, though a knowledge of both is necessary for rational procedure.

One of the most characteristic features of early childhood is physical and mental restlessness. Under normal conditions, the healthy child is quiet only during sleep. So incessantly active is he by nature that, if he voluntarily sits still on a chair for any length of time, such unnatural conduct is rightly viewed by the observant mother as a symptom of illness. But watch the little fellow in his natural environment; see him flit hither and thither, from one thing to another, in continual joy and excitement, for all the world



like a butterfly in the garden! It is impossible for him to hold his mind in focus on one object for any considerable length of time, new and interesting though the object may be. The world is so big and so wonderful to him that he cannot be content to exhaust the interest of this one experience, while a thousand other things, more marvellous by far, are crowding upon his consciousness. Such is the child who, upon entering school at the age of six, is compelled by his teacher to sit quietly at an uncomfortable desk for an hour at a time, and to exhaust his feeble powers of sustained attention upon perplexing problems which have little relation to his actual experiences.

Play is the natural life of a child. It may be defined as spontaneous self-activity in relation to environment; which, by the way, is a fairly satisfactory definition of education itself, as Froebel so insistently argued. There are various explanations of play, none of which are entirely satisfactory, but all of which seem to contain certain elements of truth. Spencer maintains that play is nature's safety-valve for surplus energy; which is true enough, but does not explain the fact that both animals and children, and grown folks too, continue to play after all superfluous energy has been exhausted. McDougall thinks that play has its origin in the instinctive impulse of rivalry and is clearly related to the combative impulse. Stanley Hall regards play as a relic of the motor habits of far-off ancestors persisting in the present, because they have their basis in the very structure of the nervous system: "and if

the form of every human occupation were to change to-day, play would be unaffected save in some of its superficial imitative forms."\* Perhaps the most generally accepted explanation of play is that it is nature's preparation for the serious tasks of life. The kitten's ball is the old cat's mouse; puppies chase and bite one another, while little mountain goats jump up and down in their gambols and butt one another, in unconscious preparation for life's activities; and, for a similar reason, girls play house and nurse dolls, while boys play with tin soldiers and toy guns, or drive imaginary automobiles and aeroplanes.

In spite of Stanley Hall's atavistic theory, one notices a decided difference between children's play and the play of animals. The animal creates nothing and learns nothing from imitation. Kittens and puppies play to-day as they did a thousand years ago; but children's play reveals a continual adaptation to an ever-enlarging environment. Children imitate in their play all phases of life's activities which fall within the range of their experience; and, as experience enlarges, their play becomes more and more complex until it shades off imperceptibly into work. Not only do they imitate the activities of life, but they adapt all sorts of things to answer the purpose of objects which they cannot secure in reality. Thus a pair of boots with laces arranged in a manner most annoying to the owner, serves splendidly the function of a completely harnessed team of horses; a broom-stick may be a saddle-horse or an aeroplane; a few

\*G. Stanley Hall: *Adolescence*, I. p. 202.

strings and pegs and blocks of wood represent a three-ring circus, and a pile of sand the site of a city. Nothing is wanting, for the imagination supplies all deficiencies.

The question is often asked: can we make use of the child's play in connection with schoolroom education? The answer is that play is nature's means of education, and, while it may be supplemented, it must not be interfered with by man's artificial schooling. On the other hand, nothing is more ridiculous in all the "old curiosity shop of absurd practices," known as the modern school, than the attempts of many false disciples of Froebel to play at work and work at play. Silly little games are invented to teach number and phonics; straight-forward useful information is disguised in insipid story form, and the whole performance takes on the appearance of an attempt on the part of the primary teacher to entertain her pupils; a sort of "classroom vaudeville with the teacher as chief performer." But Froebel and the true kindergartners, who have solved for us the relation of a child's play to his school education, look upon play in a very different light indeed. "We should not consider play as a frivolous thing," says Froebel; "on the contrary, it is a thing of profound significance . . . . By means of play the child expands in joy as the flower expands when it proceeds from the bud." And again: "Peace and joy, health and the fullness of life accrue to a child when his play, like his general development, is in harmony with the all-life."\* (By the "all-life," Froebel means the unity of the child's soul with Nature and with God.)

\*Froebel: *Pedagogics of the Kindergarten*.

Children's play reveals a sort of two-fold world in which they move and have their being; the world of sense perception; and the world of fantasy and make-believe—more real to the little child than the world of reality itself. Any detailed study of the psychological processes by which a child becomes acquainted with his natural environment is irrelevant to a discussion of the place of literature in the development of child life for the reason that the world of things round about one should be mastered at first hand through the senses rather than artificially through literature. Yet, as the purpose of literature is to portray life, all phases of child life should be reflected, and so a word in explanation of the nature of the primary pupil's world of sense perception is necessary, in order that our choice of material in literature may be in harmony with the life which it is intended to nurture.

The little child looks out objectively upon a world of concrete reality; and he does not look in subjectively upon his own thoughts and feelings. Neither is he analytical; and abstractions and generalizations have no meaning whatever for him. His life is one maze of moving-pictures; bright things, things that make a noise, things that do something,—these are the things that attract his attention and excite his curiosity. His range of experience is narrow, but ever enlarging. His senses are alert, particularly the senses of touch and sight. He loves to see and handle, to investigate, to find out things for himself, and to do things on his own initiative.

Every new experience must be explained in terms of previous experiences, for nothing lives isolated in the mind. Where the new links up naturally with the old to form enlarged "apperceptive masses," the process is one of orderly sense perception, memory, and reason. But, where previous experience fails to supply a reasonable basis for the explanation of a new element, that delightful form of child imagination, called fantasy, steps boldly into the breach with one of those fantastic explanations so characteristic of children and savages. And, because the little child's range of systematized experiences is so narrow, and the great world of nature, and the world of grown-folks' activities so big, so new, so interesting, and so dependent upon his imagination for explanation, he may well be said to live in a world of wonder and fantasy rather than in a world of realities.

Like his prototype in the evolution of the race the little child is credulous, open to suggestion, and superstitious; for what is superstition but a term which the present wise generation applies to the fancies and fears inspired in the childhood of the race by wonder and admiration for the things they were unable to understand! And so with the little child. All unexplainable things are equally strange and wonderful. Santa Claus, Jack the Giant Killer, and God are just as real, and no more marvellous than stars, flowers, bears, and policemen. And so the great thunder-cloud in the west is the giant that Jack killed; the stars are the daisies in the meadows of heaven, or lights in the houses

of heaven; the summer shower is sprinkled from God's watering-can to revive the flowers; and the man-in-the-moon is a real man, put there because he was naughty, as an object lesson to little children.

Through fantasy the child makes the acquaintance of fairies and goblins, elves and pixies; and through fantasy he finds a perfectly satisfactory explanation of the unexplainable. Fantasy is born of wonder. This is so delightfully pictured by Dickens in *A Child's Dream of a Star* that it would be difficult to get a better idea of child fantasy than by quoting a few sentences:

"There was once a child, and he strolled about a good deal, and thought of a number of things. He had a sister, who was a child too, and his constant companion. These two used to wonder all day long. They wondered at the beauty of the flowers; they wondered at the height and blueness of the sky; they wondered at the goodness and the power of God, who made the lovely world.

"They used to say to one another sometimes, 'Supposing all the children upon earth were to die, would the flowers, and the water, and the sky be sorry?' They believed they would be sorry. 'For', said they, 'the buds are the children of the flowers, and the little playful streams that gambol down the hillsides are the children of the water; and the smallest bright specks, playing at hide-and-seek in the sky all night, must surely be the children of the stars, and they would always be grieved to see their playmates, the children of men, no more.'"

It is, however, in children's make-believe games that the element of fantasy is seen most clearly. The reason

for this is partly, of course, that the casual observer is better acquainted with the nature of children's play than with the nature of their thoughts and feelings. We see them nursing sick dolls back to health, watering imaginary horses at imaginary troughs, fighting wild Indians, and all the rest of it; but we fail to listen to their little soliloquies on the meaning and purpose of the various objects and forces of nature which have come within their experience. Again, action is more natural to the little child than soliloquy. He is living at the play time of life; and his play is largely the product of fantasy, for fantasy is the dominant element in his mental equipment. Out of this little world of reality he passes, and into the world of make-believe, building it up out of his own small experiences, to be sure, but transformed by the magic wand of fantasy. The transition comes to every child just as easily and as naturally as, upon one occasion, Alice, following the white rabbit, entered Wonderland, and upon another occasion, explored the world behind the looking-glass. That is, the child is not playing a part; he is living a life. He is not hampered by the hum-drum limitations of time and space; his imagination can surmount the highest hurdles of impossibility. There is nothing remarkable in the fact that the beanstalk leads to the giant's castle, nor that Santa Claus comes with his rein-deers from the frozen north and visits every good little boy and girl in the world on a single night; so surely there is nothing remarkable in the fact that one may become in turn a policeman, an engineer, a soldier with his gun, or a spirited

horse planning a runaway. "Let's pretend," is the *Open Sesame* into robbers' caves and kings' castles alike; it is the charm by which universal childhood passes into the land of wonder and make-believe.

The saying is often quoted that a little child is neither moral nor immoral; that he is non-moral. The statement is true, if it means that he has not yet reasoned out the question of his rights and obligations in relation to others; but if it means that he has no natural tendency to do what is right, and that moral ideas must be implanted in his mind by his elders, then the statement is not true. Morality does not grow *in vacuo*; and if a sense of what is true, fitting, right, or noble can be developed by instruction and experience, it is because there is something in the original nature of human beings, which, for lack of a better term, we may call the moral sense, upon which instruction and experience act. On the other hand, it is equally erroneous to suppose that the child is a little angel who comes "trailing clouds of glory" from heaven which is his home. Our primary pupil is the resultant of the forces of heredity and environment, neither of which is without spot or blemish. The possibilities lying fallow in his soul are by no means infinite. He inherits limitations as well as possibilities; and what capabilities he does possess have already been warped and perhaps stultified, by reaction in an imperfect environment.

The little child, then, is neither moral nor immoral, but possesses both positive and negative traits. And, in spite of all that can be done, both desirable and undesirable ten-



dencies will persist and bear fruit in action and character. It is the duty of parents and teachers to provide the fullest possible scope for desirable tendencies, and to check undesirable tendencies by controlling the environment in which they grow;—withholding the stimuli necessary for their development; and by making the consequences of undesirable actions painful or uncomfortable. Thus desirable tendencies harden into good habits while undesirable tendencies are nipped in the bud, and the moral sense is unconsciously quickened and strengthened.

It is of little value to explain to a young child by precept and discourse that his misconduct is wrong. Moralizing has no effect upon him, for he has no clear concepts of right and wrong. Even the fact that certain actions bring pain to others does not appeal strongly to him, for he is much more concerned as yet about his own welfare than he is about the welfare of others. It must be pointed out to him in an unmistakable manner that his deeds react upon himself. Thus there gradually develops in his mind the judgment that good is that which brings pleasure and satisfaction, while evil is that which brings discomfort and pain. His nature insists upon the former and resents the latter; and he becomes gradually aware of certain inalienable rights which belong to him by virtue of his very being. He insists upon the recognition of these rights by others; they insist upon his recognition of the same rights with regard to themselves, and there develops a tacit understanding of the fact that

every right involves a corresponding obligation. "Altruism develops out of egotism," the individual must be conscious of his own rights before he can be conscious of the rights of others. The process is aided by the instinctive desire to stand well in the opinions of others; but morality has its real basis in self-preservation and self-realization. In some such manner the moral code is developed, both in the history of the individual and in the evolution of the race.

Moral generalizations and rules for conduct are of comparatively little value in any stage of life; for the situations to which one responds are always individual and concrete, while rules and maxims are abstract. True, they help the adult, who has the power of abstract reasoning, to size up an actual situation before he acts; but action, nevertheless, is always specific and concrete. Little children, however, have no such power; their reasoning is in the concrete. Abstractions and generalizations have no meaning for them; and so it is useless to attempt to teach ethics by means of maxims, rules, and precepts. Concrete illustrations in the form of literature, reflecting the logical results of specific actions, have a decided moral influence, of course. In fact this is the chief function of literature. But abstract moral truths, and abstract ideals of life and conduct have no legitimate place in the training of children before they reach the stage of adolescence.

## BOOKS OF REFERENCE

*(See also list of reference books under Chapter II')*

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## CHAPTER III

### PRIMARY LITERATURE

"Do you know", says Plato, "that the most important part of every task is the beginning of it, especially when we are dealing with anything young and tender. For then it can be most easily moulded, and whatever impression any one cares to stamp upon it sinks in." Thus Plato gives expression to the fundamental principle of psychology, that early childhood is the impressionable time of life; the period when habits are most easily learned; the stage of development during which the individual is, to some extent at least, as clay in the potter's hands. We find the same judgment in the writings of educators from Plato to Dewey; in fact everybody realizes the truth of it, and yet we fail to apply it in actual classroom practice.

If the most important part of a child's schooling is the beginning of it, then the most important teacher in the school is the primary teacher. She, above all others, should possess those natural qualities of disposition and character which distinguish the "born teacher." She should have a broad academic and professional background; and, in addition, should be trained specially for her peculiar function

of guiding and directing the development of child-life in its most impressionable stage. Similarly, in literary culture, the child's tastes and possibilities depend to a considerable extent upon the training received in the home and in the primary grades of the school. A noted writer on the teaching of English recalls a university professor who claims to be able to distinguish by certain delicate superiorities of literary taste, those students who have been nurtured in their infancy on Mother Goose rhymes and jingles.

Unfortunately, the home training in primary literature cannot be relied upon in this new and busy country. First-hand contact with thousands of children growing up on the prairies of Saskatchewan has taught me that their literary attainments are, in the majority of cases, meagre indeed. Where the home has failed, the school must come to the rescue. Primary teachers, in this country at least, must not assume that much has been accomplished in the way of a back-ground for school literature. It is not my purpose to find fault with the home for failure in this respect, but rather to emphasize the increased responsibility of the school, and to point out the necessity of starting our study of primary literature at the very beginning.

The problem of learning to read will be dealt with in a later chapter. Suffice it to say here that it is by no means the complicated problem which it is generally supposed to be. In fact, I rather sympathize with the exclamation of Rousseau in *Émile*, that it is a shame to spend time speaking of such nonsense in a treatise on education. Give

the child the desire to read and every method will be a good one. Appropriate literature, properly presented, supplies all the motive power that is necessary, and the child learns to read by reading.

The all-important question, then, appears to be the choice of reading material. We have insisted that literature selections should be in harmony with the child's needs,—his natural tastes and interests, his mental capacity and moral development; and we have already discussed the primary pupil's equipment in this respect. Keeping our psychological basis in mind, we find it necessary to rule out a great deal of material usually included in primary literature.

First, there is that material, altogether too common, which has been manufactured for the purpose of providing reading drills. Literature is sacrificed to the mechanics of reading, or rather to a mistaken idea of what constitutes the mechanics of reading, for the content of the stories and verses manufactured expressly for an artificial purpose must needs be artificial and uninteresting, and hence totally unfit for reading material. School primers abound in such nonsense. From a highly recommended "standard" primer, and one certainly in advance of the usual type, I choose the following illustration: the lesson is repeated verbatim:

"Bobby and Betty help Mother with the dishes.  
Mother washes the dishes.  
Bobby and Betty wipe them.  
Then Mother puts the dishes away.

*To be Memorized:—*

Cups and saucers,  
Plates and dishes,  
My little girl  
Washes the dishes.

When I was a little boy  
I washed my Mother's dishes,  
Now I am a great boy,  
I roll in golden riches."

Surely it is insulting to a child's intelligence to ask him to read such stuff; while to require it to be memorized is little short of a crime against childhood.

Almost equal in absurdity to such artificial nonsense is the attempt to develop and train the moral emotions of little children through certain forms of didactic story and verse. Children naturally resent being preached at, and they are not easily deceived. They have a fine sense of the fitness of things, and you may rely upon them to penetrate the mask, if the content of the selection is within their mental range, and to resent the lesson drawn. This sort of thing is bad enough in story form, but when it is presented in the form of verses to be memorized, the offence is exaggerated. I remember yet the feeling of resentment against both literature and teacher which arose in my own childish mind upon being forced to repeat at the Friday afternoon concert such so-called "memory-gems" as the following:



"Two eyes and only one mouth have you;  
The reason of this is clear.  
It teaches, my child, that it will not do  
To talk about all you hear."

"Speak the truth and speak it ever,  
Cost it what it will.  
He who hides the wrong he does  
Does the wrong thing still."

Everyone who remembers his own childhood can recall similar experiences. Most of us can recall our early fantastic explanations of verses and songs which were beyond our powers of comprehension. "Whoever you are, be noble," was the motto for the week. The teacher little realized that the child's idea of *noble* was "a relation of the king." More ludicrous perhaps, but just as natural, was the confusion of Southey's delightful story of *The Three Bears* with the Sunday-school hymn, which led the child, referred to by Stanley Hall, to ask his mother in puzzled tones: "What kind of a bear is a consecrated, cross-eyed bear?"

One turns naturally to the genius of Lewis Carroll for the last word on this subject. No one, save perhaps Stevenson, has succeeded in entering into the child world with the same complete abandonment of the adult point of view; and no one has succeeded in picturing the weaknesses and foibles of life with the same delicate, whimsical humor. His take-off on moral memory-gems is convincing. Alice suddenly finds herself out of this dull world of reality and into wonderland,

where four times five is twelve, and London is the capital of Paris. Naturally she is a little confused at first. "How puzzling it all is! I'll try if I know all the things I used to know. I'll try and say, 'How doth the little'—". But the busy bee fails to appear with his text for improving each shining hour; and Alice recites as follows:

"How doth the little crocodile  
Improve his shining tail,  
And pour the waters of the Nile  
On every golden scale!

"How cheerfully he seems to grin,  
How neatly spreads his claws,  
And welcomes little fishes in,  
With gently smiling jaws!"

Then there is the story-coated information lesson,—a more pardonable form of didactic literature, perhaps, than the thinly disguised moral, but equally unsatisfying from the child's point of view. The little child is intensely interested in the world of reality round about him. He is continually asking questions, and seeking information; but he wants you to help him get it first hand through his senses, or he wants your straightforward explanation when it is required. Those formal information lessons, however, which comprise the bulk of the orthodox type of school readers, have no place in my idea of school literature. They make dreary reading at best. What child can be interested in reading from his book that, "the seven colors in order are violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, and red," and that

"blue and yellow make green," when with a little guidance he can find out these things for himself! One recalls, somewhere in Matthew Arnold's *Essays* a vigorous denunciation of such material for children's reading. "But the heart-breaking thing is," says Arnold, "that what they *do* learn is often so ill chosen. An apple has a stalk, peel, pulp, core, pips and juice; it is odorous and opaque, and is used for making a pleasant drink called cider." Even this is decidedly preferable to the story type of information lesson. This is at least honest and sincere; it does not come in the stolen robes of mere literature, and so does not arouse the same feeling of resentment as the story-coated variety. Who does not remember the feeling of distaste with which he read under compulsion, sad, disguised information lessons as *The Story of a Dime*, and *The History of a Piece of Coal*?

Now that we have excluded from our primary reading course all artificial material, whether its purpose be for word drills, for conveying information, or teaching ethics, and have insisted upon mere literature as the only form of literary diet suited to the tastes of children, we are in a position to enter the wonderful storehouse of available material. And what a feast could be prepared! As one looks about, one is impressed with the difficulty of choosing the best. All that can be accomplished within the limits of a single chapter is to indicate the general nature of a literary menu for primary pupils, and leave the individual teacher free to enter the storehouse and take from the

abundant supply her own choice of material. I cannot refrain from digressing at this point to interject the remark that, in my opinion, a real, enjoyable feast is the only way in which literature can be brought into vital contact with child life.

There are certain dangers involved in applying the principle of recapitulation too generally in defence of educational theory; yet it seems to be universally acknowledged that the human mind, in its educational development to mental maturity passes through the spiritual history of the race. "Man, as himself a social being by nature, as a real part in an associated whole, reproduces in his own mental life the mental life of the race, and thereby becomes educated."\* If we accept the principle, we have sufficient argument for looking to the literature of the childhood of the race for material best suited to the needs of the childhood of the individual. But, as our arguments are based on psychology rather than history, the principle of recapitulation is referred to merely in confirmation of our general point of view.

By far the most important type of primary literature is the folk-lore which has come down to us from the cradle of the race. "These stories have been told to children since the world was young, and they are as fresh, as interesting, and as captivating to-day as ever." They are real literature, or they would not have passed the test of Time; and not only are they literature, but they are in beautiful harmony

\*Horne: *Philosophy of Education*, Chap. IV.

with the tastes and interests of little children. "The hearts of children hunger for Fairyland and Folk-lore; their souls thirst for the elemental racial happenings, and amply rewarded are the parents and teachers who satisfy them."\*

The fact that poetry seems to have preceded prose in the literature of the race, together with the fact that all mothers sing lullabys and croon little ditties to their children in the cradle, before they tell them stories, suggests the advisability of beginning our analysis of primary literature with poetry rather than prose. Also, our simplest folk-lore is in verse form. So, even at the risk of interfering with the continuity of thought, I purpose to cover in a general way the field of primary literature in verse, and then discuss the selection of stories in prose. It is hardly necessary to point out that this order should not be followed in the classroom. Both prose and poetry should be enjoyed from the beginning of the child's school course. In fact, a large part of the whole field of primary literature, indicated below, should be covered in the home before the child goes to school. But, as already stated, experience has shown that these desirable conditions do not exist, and where the home has failed, the school has an extra duty to perform.

The first folk-lore to make its appeal to children is that which comes in the form of Mother Goose rhymes and melodies. The simple, naive style, the vigorous action, the playful humor, and withal the sound philosophy of life which they portray,—these, and other qualities,—their

\*Horne: *Story-Telling, Questioning, and Studying*, Chap. I.

rhythmic movement and classic language, render them eminently suitable for the first foundations of a literary appreciation.

We may well pause to consider a few of these qualities in some detail. Mere mention of the simple, narrative style and the interesting subject matter,—generally about people and animals behaving in unexpected ways in response to every-day situations, will recall to the mind of every one who knows Mother Goose such interesting characters as the cow that jumped over the moon; the old woman who lived in a shoe; or the one who was tossed up in a basket; and the man in the moon who burnt his mouth eating cold pease porridge. The humor is delightful, for the frailties of life are held up to hearty ridicule and yet there is no sting. Picture the fashionable old lady with rings on her fingers and bells on her toes; the little boy minding the sheep, under the haystack fast asleep; or think of the beautiful stupor of Simple Simon, or of my son John, who went to bed with his stockings on. And it is quite in accordance with the natural credulity of little children to be half amused and half impressed with the story of the man in our town who was so wondrous wise that he jumped into a bramble bush and scratched out both his eyes, or the story of Old Dan Tucker who died with a tooth-ache in his heel. There is a sound philosophy in many of them. . . . “All the king’s horses and all the king’s men couldn’t put Humpty-Dumpty together again.” It was a London capitalist who put in his thumb and pulled out a plum, and said,

"What a good boy am I!" But a modern parallel could be found without effort in the history of boom days in Western Canada. The style is as worthy as the content. The language is classic; such apt expressions as "wondrous wise," "a worthy old soul," could not be improved upon. This is to be expected, for the diction and rhythm have been polished smooth by the constant repetition of generations of mothers. We find the same content in different languages and colloquial dialects, and always with the same charm of expression.

The outstanding quality of Mother Goose is rhythm; and it is chiefly by virtue of their inimitable rhythmic cadence that these verses appeal to children. Every normal child possesses a sense of rhythm and harmony; in fact will respond to rhythmic tone and movement before he is able to speak. This is the reason that, "Trot, trot to Boston to buy a loaf of bread," "To market, to market, to buy a fat pig," and a dozen and one other nonsense jingles, the merit of which lies in rhythmic movement, are a source of delight to childhood. "I aver these rhymes to possess the primary value of rhyme—that is, to be rhythmical in a pleasant and exemplary degree," writes Ruskin. And it was no less a master of style that Ruskin himself, who failed lamentably in the effort to add a few verses to a Mother Goose rhyme. The story of Dame Wiggins of Lee and her Seven Wonderful Cats seemed to Ruskin incomplete without some reference to what the cats learned when they went to school, and so he attempted to remedy the defect. To notice the

failure one has but to read aloud the first three verses of the jingle, the third of which was added by Ruskin:

"Dame Wiggins of Lee was a worthy old soul,  
As e'er threaded needle or washed in a bowl;  
She held mice and rats in such antipa-thy  
That seven fine cats kept Dame Wiggins of Lee.

"The mice and rats scared by this fierce whiskered crew,  
The poor seven cats soon had nothing to do;  
So, as any one idle she ne'er loved to see,  
She sent them to school, did Dame Wiggins of Lee.

"The master soon wrote that they all of them knew  
How to read the word 'milk' and to spell the word 'mew'.  
And they all washed their faces before they took tea,—  
'Were there ever such dears!' said Dame Wiggins of Lee."

In addition to Mother Goose, there is a wealth of nonsense jingle, too often overlooked in choosing material for primary literature. Edward Lear's *Book of Nonsense* is indispensable; the complete edition should be in every school, and yet I find few teachers who are familiar with it.

"There was an old Derry down Derry,  
Who loved to see little folks merry;  
So he made them a book,  
And with laughter they shook,  
At the fun of that Derry down Derry."

This is Edward Lear, of whom Ruskin writes: "Surely the most beneficent and innocent of all children's nonsense books yet produced is the *Book of Nonsense* with its corollary carols, inimitable and refreshing, and perfect in rhythm.



I really don't know any author to whom I am half as grateful for my idle self as Edward Lear." It is difficult to analyze the charm of Lear's nonsense verses; they must be read to be appreciated. A number of his limericks and longer poems may be found in almost any book of children's poetry; but it is desirable that every primary teacher become acquainted with the complete edition, and preferably the one containing appropriate illustrations by Lear himself.

Eugene Field, and James Whitcomb Riley have also made valuable contributions to the fun and nonsense phase of child literature. One is tempted to quote examples, but space will not permit, and the reader is merely referred to such selections as *The Sugar Plum Tree* and *The Duel* by the former; and the *Raggedy Man's Story of the Man-in-the-Moon* by the latter. Then there are inimitable bits of nonsense verse scattered here and there throughout *Alice in Wonderland*, *Through the Looking-glass*, and *Sylvia and Bruno*,—all by Lewis Carroll. The best of these appears to me to be Tweedledee's recitation of *The Walrus and the Carpenter*. I cannot refrain from quoting one verse:

" 'The time has come' the Walrus said,  
To talk of many things:  
Of shoes—and ships—and sealing wax—  
Of cabbages—and kings—  
And why the sea is boiling hot—  
And whether pigs have wings.' "

We referred in the previous chapter to the fact that the child's dominant forms of consciousness are sense perception and imagination; that he lives in a sort of two-fold world,—the world of reality, and the world of wonder and make-believe; and that, therefore, primary literature should deal with actual child experiences, and with things of fantasy. The lyric element will everywhere predominate; even narrative poems will be colored by imaginative and lyric appeal.

It is impossible in limited space to do justice to the wealth of poetry relating to child experiences, actual and make-believe; while to attempt any detailed study of the field of imaginative, lyric verse, one must needs enter into a discussion of the whole realm of Nature—her manifestations and moods, as they appear to the imagination and emotions of children. Clearly such an undertaking is not to be attempted here. This chapter is intended merely to be suggestive; the essential types of primary literature are specified, with one or two examples of each, and, in a general way, it is indicated to the teacher where these and similar selections may be found.

Robert Louis Stevenson is the prince of children's poets. Someone has said, that some writers talk about children, others talk at children, but Stevenson, alone, speaks with the heart and voice of a child. He seems never to have forgotten his own childish experiences, and in *The Child's Garden of Verses*, he simply lives his child-life over again. It is probably true of Eugene Field that he has not quite succeeded in becoming "as a little child"; that he is still

an adult talking to children, and about children. But, at least, he has succeeded in doing this in a unique and delightful manner. Field took real joy in watching children at their play, and through his sympathetic observation of them was enabled to enter into the child-world to some extent at least, if not as completely as Stevenson. *Poems of Childhood*, by Eugene Field, should find a conspicuous place in every syllabus of primary literature. Other valuable collections are *Sing Song* by Christina Rossetti; and *Rhymes of Childhood* and *A Child's World* by James Whitcomb Riley. Beyond these four names—Stevenson, Field, Rossetti, and Riley—it is idle to enumerate children's poets. We have discussed the qualities of primary literature, and can only add that where these qualities are to be found—in the writings of Longfellow, Jane Taylor, Celia Thaxter, Mary Howitt, and the others; or in the works of the great poets, Wordsworth, Browning, and Shakespeare—there the primary teacher should go for her material.

The simple, every-day experiences of children at play from the subject-matter of many of the most charming selections of primary poetry. As Stevenson says:

“The world is so full of a number of things,  
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.”

Christina Rossetti excels in picturing in dainty form these simple little child experiences; for example:

"Mother shake the cherry-tree;  
Susan catch a cherry;  
Oh. how funny that will be,  
Let's be merry!

One for brother, one for sister,  
Two for mother more,  
Six for father, hot and tired.  
Knocking at the door."

Child appreciation of the wonders of nature finds expression in such poems as *The Daisies* by Sherman; *The Wind* by Stevenson; *Good-night and Good-morning* by Lord Houghton. Pets and domestic animals are an unfailing source of delight to little children. So much good verse has been written about them that one hesitates to specify individual poems. Take the cow, for instance; one does not think of her as a subject for poetic inspiration, yet Rossetti, Stevenson, and Jane Taylor have all written charming pieces on behalf of the friendly cow.\*

For poems of make-believe the teacher should go to *A Child's Garden of Verses*. The note of imaginative play is dominant in the whole collection. Perhaps the best example is *My Kingdom*, a poem of exceptional imaginative charm and one which illustrates the two-fold world in which the child lives. All afternoon the little fellow has been king in the Land of Make-Believe, but at evenfall he hears his mother's voice calling him home to tea, and he is brought back with a jolt to the world of reality:

\*See Appendix A. page 143.

## MY KINGDOM

Down by the shining water well  
I found a very little dell,  
No higher than my head.  
The heather and the gorse about  
In summer bloom were coming out,  
Some yellow and some red.

I called the little pool a sea;  
The little hills were big to me;  
For I am very small.  
I searched the caverns up and down,  
And named them, one and all.

And all about was mine, I said,  
The little sparrows overhead  
The little minnows too.  
This was the world and I was king;  
For me the bees came by to sing,  
For me the swallows flew.

I played there were no deeper seas,  
Nor any wider plains than these,  
Nor any other kings than me.  
At last I heard my mother call  
Out from the house at evenfall,  
To call me home to tea.

And I must rise and leave my dell,  
And leave my dimpled water well,  
And leave my heather blooms.  
Alas! and as my home I neared  
How very big my nurse appeared,  
How great and cool the rooms!

If Stevenson excels in portraying the land of make-believe, Eugene Field has no equal as a writer of lullabys. Of him James Whitcomb Riley writes:

"His tribute:—Lustre in the faded bloom  
Of cheeks of old, old mothers; and the fall  
Of gracious dew in eyes long dry and dim;  
And hope in lovers' pathways midst perfume  
Of woodland haunts; and—meed exceeding all—  
The love of little children laurels him."

*Wynken, Blynken, and Nod*, and *The Rock-a-by-Lady* are to me among the sweetest lullabys in the English language. This, however, is a matter of personal preference; the teacher may prefer *Nightfall in Dordrecht*, *Oh Little Child*, or *The Norse Lullaby*, and the chances are that the teacher's preference will find most response in the hearts of her pupils. But the choice of selections should not be confined to the lullabys of Eugene Field, excellent as they are. Primary literature abounds in simple lullabys, many of which have been set to appropriate music, and should be sung to be enjoyed. The old nursery song *Rock-a-by-Baby*; Tennyson's *What Does Little Birdie Say*; Scott's *Lullaby of an Infant Chief*; Miller's *Wee Willie Winkie*; Kipling's *Seal Lullaby*, and Tennyson's *Sweet and Low*, are examples which will indicate the wide range of suitable material.

No mention has been made of poems which stir the deeper emotions of children. As a general rule this type of literature should be used sparingly, both in prose and verse. But

if literature is intended to teach life, all phases of child-life should be reflected; and while the qualities of mirth and gladness should largely predominate in child literature, as in child-life, yet, because children have their own little tragedies to contend with, ideal expression of these should find a place in literature. There seems to be no sufficient reason why children should be denied the pathetic appeal of Field's *Little Boy Blue*, or Dickens' *A Child's Dream of a Star*.

Corresponding in a general way to the Mother Goose rhymes in verse, are the accumulative stories in prose. These have come down to us from the very cradle of story-telling:—*A Kid, a Kid* is from the Hebrew; *Chicken Licken*, and *Titty Mouse and Tatty Mouse* are old English folk-tales, probably not so universally known as *The House that Jack Built* and *The Old Woman and Her Pig*. The simple repetition of step after step as the story progresses not only enables the young pupil to hold the thought in solution, but also appeals to his sense of delight in rhythmic movement as well. The climax of the story *A Kid, a Kid* will serve to illustrate this point:

"Then came the butcher and killed the ox, that drank  
the water, that quenched the fire, that burned the stick,  
that beat the dog, that bit the cat, that ate the rat, that  
my father bought for two pieces of money;

a kid, a kid."

From accumulative stories we pass naturally to such masterpieces as *Little Red Riding Hood*, *The Three Billy*

*Goats Gruff, The Gingerbread Boy, The Little Half Chick*—stories gathered from the primitive literature of various nations; and, like the Mother Goose Melodies, polished by repetition until they are well-nigh perfect. But literature does not have to be ancient to possess merit; one of the best nursery stories available is *The Three Bears* by Robert Southey. It is decidedly unfortunate that persons editing collections of these nursery classics cannot refrain from attempting to improve upon the original versions. The substitution of Silverlocks, or Goldilocks for the prying old woman in Southey's tale, and the other amendments made in current versions, presumably to render the story prettier and better suited to the delicate sensibilities of little children, have succeeded chiefly in spoiling the true worth of the story. Of longer stories, *Goody Two Shoes*, generally attributed to Oliver Goldsmith, will always hold a permanent place among the classics of child literature. Its literary style, the purity of its sentiment, the slyly, playful humor, and the sound, common sense of the tale, combine to make it attractive to children of all ages.

We pass now to a consideration of by far the most important type of folk-lore suitable for primary reading, namely fairy-tales. These, for the most part, consist of collections of old legends dealing with the pranks of imaginary little people—fairies, elves, brownies, imps, and pixies, who give "pinches, nips, and bobs" to naughty folk, and who reward in a delightfully extravagant manner the deeds of good people. They also tell of dragons and giants, who



pillage and spoil, and of valiant knights who destroy these monsters, and receive in return the hand of the king's daughter in marriage.

In using this material the teacher should keep in mind that these collections of old tales were not made expressly for the use of children. Their purpose was to preserve national folk-lore; to set down in permanent form the old tales that had been handed down from generation to generation. Naturally these stories reflect the character of the minds that invented them and kept them alive, and so we expect to find evidences of superstition and ignorance. In the best children's editions, however, all objectionable stories have been omitted; and where otherwise good stories have been found to contain undesirable elements, these have been eliminated without seriously interfering with the charm and vigor of the original. On the other hand, the primitive minds which devised these stories were essentially child-like minds, to whom the world was a marvellous place, not governed by law, but ruled by supernatural beings. Little children view the world in somewhat the same light; hence the suitability of these stories for primary literature.

The best collection of fairy-lore is that made by the two brothers, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. These men, the one a noted scholar, and the other a man of artistic temperament, spent many years gathering together the household tales of German peasants. They wrote them down just as they heard them from the peasant wives; and it is largely in the literal reproduction of these tales in the form in which

they passed from generation to generation, that their merit consists. There are many English translations of Grimm's *Fairy Tales*. The complete editions are not suitable for primary literature; perhaps the best volume for school use is that published in the *Riverside Literature Series*. What the brothers Grimm did for German fairy-lore, Joseph Jacobs did for the English and Celtic, and Charles Perrault for the French. Selections from Grimm, Jacobs, and Perrault should form a vital part of every child's stock of stories. From Grimm's collection the teacher might select *Snow White and Rose Red*, *Mother Holle*, *The Frog King*, and *The Goose Girl*; from English tales, *Whittington and His Cat*, and *Jack the Giant-Killer*; from the Celtic, *Hud-den*, *Dudden and Donald O'Neary*, and *Fair, Brown and Trembling*; from Perrault's collection, *Puss in Boots*, *Cinderella*, *Toads and Diamonds*; and we might add *Beauty and the Beast*, which is one of the best of French tales, though not included in Perrault's original collection. Such gems as *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Tom Thumb*, and *The Sleeping Beauty* appear in the folk-lore of all three languages.

Then there is that delightful collection of Eastern wonder stories of giants, genii, caliphs, and beautiful princesses, known as *The Arabian Nights*—stories supposed to have been told night after night for one thousand and one nights, by the clever and resourceful wife of a powerful sultan, who kept postponing her execution, day after day, because she contrived each night to have the story which she was

telling him break off at sunrise at a point so interesting that the old rascal could not refrain from wishing to hear the next instalment. The best stories from *The Arabian Nights* to tell to primary pupils are: *Aladdin; or the Wonderful Lamp*, *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*, and *Sinbad the Sailor*.

Primary literature contains a wealth of modern fairy stories; but, as Ruskin has pointed out, many of them are somewhat artificial on account of "the author's addressing himself to children bred in schoolrooms and drawing-rooms instead of fields and woods." This criticism does not apply to Andersen's *Fairy Tales*, which for natural setting, imaginative qualities, and tender pathos are unsurpassed by those of any writer. There are many good editions of this classic; perhaps the best is that issued by the Danish Government, and translated into English by Broekstad. From Andersen's tales the teacher might select *The Ugly Duckling*, *The Tinder Box*, *The Constant Tin Soldier*, and *The Princess on the Bean*.

The most delightful of all modern fairy stories is *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll. This gem, and its companion story, *Through the Looking Glass*, have been published in one volume by the Macmillan Company, with profuse and apt illustrations by Sir John Tenniel. No child's course in literature is complete without a reading and re-reading of these gems. *Little Nipper and Bruno* is a somewhat similar production by the same author, and while it does not possess quite the charm of *Alice in Wonderland*,

it is worthy of a place in any list of books for children. Other modern fairly books of merit are, *The Wizard of Oz* by L. Frank Baum; *The Little Lamé Prince* by Dinah Mulock Craik, and Kipling's *Jungle Books*.

The last, and in some respects the most important type of folk-lore for children, to demand attention in this chapter are myths and fables—stories which have come down to us from primitive man's attempts to explain the wonders of nature, and to reveal the moral law.

Fables are short, dramatic, moral tales, in which beasts and sometimes inanimate objects speak and act as human beings. They were invented by primitive man to teach homely virtues and worldly wisdom in a practical, objective manner. Our best fables have their origin in Hindoo, Persian, and Greek legends. They are supposed to have been gathered together by Aesop, an Athenian slave of the time of Solon; in fact, Aesop is generally credited with their invention. It is quite probable that they may be attributed to him in the same sense that the Homeric poems are attributed to Homer. Of Aesop's fables, the best suited to the needs of primary pupils are *Belling the Cat*, *The Boy Who Cried 'Wolf!'*, *The Dog in the Manger*, *The Fox and the Grapes*, and *The Lion and the Mouse*.

Myths have their origin in primitive interpretations of the phenomena of nature. Their creators are unknown; in fact, they are generally presumed to have a historic basis; no doubt on account of the fact that in them the natural and the supernatural are so cunningly interwoven as to give

the whole an air of probability. Generally speaking, our best myths belong more properly to the literature of the intermediate and senior grades; and yet, because literature begins in myth and legend, and because the wise teacher will plan to lay the foundations, even in the primary grades, for a historic perspective of the field of literature, it is well to include a few of the most charming Greek myths,—stories of *Apollo* and *Vulcan*, *Diana*, *Neptune*, and *Proteus*—in our syllabus for primary grades. The mythology of the North American Indians, idealized in Longfellow's *Hiawatha*, should not be omitted. It is beautifully suited to the literary tastes and interests of little children. One of the outstanding recollections of my own early childhood is the story of *Hiawatha* as it was read to the little family group gathered about my mother's knee. I verily believe I owe more to that single experience than to my whole school course in literature.

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- Dixon: Children's edition of *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments*.  
Field: *Poems of Childhood*.  
Goodridge: *Mother Goose Rhymes*.  
Grimm Brothers: *Fairy Tales* (*Riverside Literature Series*).  
Harris: *Uncle Remus*.  
Jacobs: *English Fairy Tales*; *Celtic Fairy*; *Aesop's Fables*.  
Kipling: *Jungle Book*.  
Kleckner: *In the Misty Realm of Fable*.  
Lear: *A Book of Nonsense*.  
Longfellow: *Hiawatha*.  
Lucas: *Book of Verses for Children*.  
Lyman, Edna: *Story Telling*.  
Mother Goose's *Book of Nursery Rhymes and Songs*—*Everyman's Library*.  
O'Shea: *Nursery Classics*; *Old Wonder Stories*; *Tales of Mother Goose*, etc.  
Peabody: *Old Greek Folk-Stories*.  
Perrault: *Fairy Tales*. (*J. M. Dent and Sons*).  
Plato: *The Republic* (*Lindsay's Translation*).  
Riley: *Rhymes of Childhood*; *A Child's World*.  
Rossetti: *Sing Song*.  
Rousseau: *Emile*.  
Scudder: *Book of Folk Stories*; *Book of Legends*; *Book of Fables*; etc.  
Stevenson: *A Child's Garden of Verses*.  
Taylor, Ann and Jane: *Original Poems*.  
Thaxter: *Stories and Poems for Children*.  
Welsh: *Goody Two Shoes*; *Tales of Mother Goose*; etc.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE PRE-ADOLESCENT PUPIL: HIS NATURAL TENDENCIES, TASTES, AND INTERESTS

The term pre-adolescence is used here, not in a strictly scientific sense, but in a somewhat loose manner, to designate the period of childhood from about nine to twelve or thirteen years of age. Important physical changes take place during these years, and, as mental life is closely related to physical life, it is natural to look for correspondingly important mental changes. Not that any exact parallel can be found between the characteristics of physical and mental growth, much less the relation of cause and effect deduced. The most that can be said in the light of the mass of divergent and frequently conflicting information available, is that periods of acceleration and retardation in physical growth, and particularly the functioning of new physical organs, are accompanied by noticeable changes in mental and moral life. One may not feel justified in following G. Stanley Hall in all his observations concerning recapitulation and culture-epochs, but it does seem reasonable to explain the presence of periods of development in the physical and mental life of the individual by reference to stages of development in the history of the race.

The pre-adolescent period is marked by a slight decrease in the rate of physical growth; it is also the period of second dentition. The fact that nutrition may be impaired by the temporary absence of teeth during this period does not explain the retardation in growth, though it surely is responsible in many individuals for nervousness and general disability. The pre-adolescent is not delicate; in fact he has more power of resisting fatigue and disease, and is more active, physically and mentally, than ever before. It would almost appear as if some of the energy which went to form bone and muscle during the previous period, when children grow so fast, is now being stored up and is available for increased physical and mental activity. G. Stanley Hall describes the characteristics of pre-adolescence as follows: "At eight or nine there begins a new period, which, for nearly four years, to the dawn of puberty, constitutes a unique stage of life, marked off by many important differences from the period which precedes and that which follows it. During these years there is a decreased rate of growth, so that the body relatively rests; but there is a striking increase of vitality, activity, and power to resist disease. Fatigue, too, is now best resisted, and it is amazing to see how much can be endured. The average child now plays more games and has more daily activity, in proportion to size and weight, than at any other stage. It would seem, as I have proposed elsewhere, with ground for the theory, as though these four years represented, on the recapitulation theory, a long period in some remote age, well above the Simian, but mainly be-



fore the historic period, when our early forbears were well adjusted to their environment. Before a higher and much more modern story was added to human nature, the young in warm climates, where most human traits were envolved, became independent of their parents, and broke away to subsist for themselves at an early age.

It would be a mistake to suppose that the outstanding characteristics of the primary stage no longer persist; that the pre-adolescent pupil is a different being with an altogether different equipment. Child development does not take place by a series of metamorphoses, but growth is continuous, and changes come gradually. The pre-adolescent pupil still lives in a world of concrete reality; his interests are objective and not subjective, that is, he looks out upon the world rather than in upon his own thoughts and feelings; he still thinks largely in the concrete; play continues to be his chief activity. But these tendencies have taken on new aspects, while other tendencies, almost negligible before, have gradually risen to importance.

It is unnecessary to add anything here to what has been said concerning the moral outlook of children. The point to be remembered is that abstract moralizing either in the form of literature or formal ethics, has no legitimate place in education before the stage of adolescence, which is, properly speaking, the high school period. On the other hand, concrete illustrations setting forth the logical results of action, whether they be drawn from the actual experiences of the children themselves, or from biography and history, or from

the field of pure literature, form the natural, commonsense material for teaching ethics in elementary schools.

The primary pupil's experience was found to be narrow, and his concepts vague and inaccurate; his ideas based upon fantasy rather than reason. His chief senses were touch and sight, and so his accurate, first-hand information was largely concerning things seen and handled. But now all senses are alert; the gate-ways of the mind stand wide open. This is the period *par excellence*, for the acquisition of useful, concrete information. Quoting again from Hall's *Adolescence*: "Here belong discipline in writing, reading, spelling, verbal memory, manual training, practice in instrumental technique, proper names, drawing, drill in arithmetic, foreign languages by oral methods, the correct pronunciation of which is far harder if acquired later, etc. The hand is never so near the brain, most of the content of the mind has entered through the senses, and the eye—and ear-gates should be open at their widest. Authority should now take precedence of reason. Children comprehend much and very rapidly if we can only refrain from explaining, but this (explaining) slows down intuition, tends to make casuists and prigs and to enfeeble the ultimate vigor of reason. It is the age of little method and much matter. The good teacher is now a pedrotrieb, or boy-driver."

We noted in Chapter II the fact that wherever the little child could find no reasonable explanation in terms of actual experience for his observations of the things and forces of nature, an irrational explanation served his purpose equally

well, and the world, for him, was one delightful mixture of fact and fancy, with no distinction between them. This was essentially the age of fantasy, the time when imagination was the controlling mental activity; not a rational form of a constructive imagination at all, but imagination untrammelled, almost unguided, by thought and purpose. As we look back upon our own childhood, or as we watch little children at play, we realize the fascinating charm of this poetic period. And now it seems to have faded into nothingness. Listen to the conversations of children of nine and ten years of age;—no trace of wonder and make-believe; fantasy is dead! Tell a marvellous tale of giants and dragons, and note the look of intolerance or disgust. At the approach of Christmastide, talk to the child of Santa Claus, and learn that his only remaining interest in that most beautiful of all the creations of fantasy lies in the nature of the contents of the pack. It was this feeling of the loss of something out of his life which prompted Wordsworth to write in the *Ode on Immortality*:

“There was a time when meadow, grove,  
and stream,  
The earth, and every common sight,  
To me did seem  
Apparelled in celestial light,  
The glory and the freshness of a dream.  
It is not now as it hath been of yore;—  
Turn wheresoe’er I may,  
By night or day,  
The things which I have seen I now can  
see no more.

Heaven lies about us in our infancy!  
Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
Upon the growing Boy."

Fantasy, we said, is dead. But imagination is not dead; there is no reason why it should not be more active than ever. Only a transition has occurred; and fantasy has given place to a more definitely directed and purposeful form of imagination. A wider experience and increased powers of reasoning have resulted in the building up of more rational relations, and things, which previously were so marvellous as to be explainable only in terms of fantasy, are now commonplace objects occupying their rational places in the child's ever-enlarging experience. It is merely a matter of disillusionment; another step towards the mental conquest of the world. But it suggests an important change in the subject matter of instruction suitable for the real education of children, and a new method of teaching, as well.

A somewhat similar development is noticeable in children's play. The frolics of very young children resemble the play of animals; they gambol and shout in pure excess of animal spirits; there are no rules, no co-operative effort, no rivalry. Later the element of fantasy and make-believe appears, and is soon the guiding principle. As the power of constructive imagination develops, play becomes more rational and more purposeful until it shades off imperceptibly into something very akin to the nature of work.

If play is defined as spontaneous self-activity, without motive and with no end in view; if in play the child "gives

full rein to individual whim and caprice,"\* while work is motivated self-activity, then pre-adolescent children work rather than play. But this is hardly a fair distinction. Play is universal; people of all ages play, and if, as sometimes happens, an individual becomes so engrossed in what he considers to be more serious things, that he has no time for play, he is failing to function as nature intended he should. The distinction between play and work is rather that in work the individual gives himself up to the demands which external conditions impose upon him; that is, there is some ulterior end, apart from the activity itself. Play is for its own sake; it may demand serious attention and great physical and mental effort, and it may be regulated by stringent rules of procedure, but its end is in itself. A psychological treatise on education makes the distinction as follows: "In work the individual surrenders himself to the service of a universal want or necessity of society, which has created a vocation or calling. Man gives up his particular, special likes and desires in work. He sacrifices ease and momentary convenience for rational ends. In play his activity is wholly turned towards his own immediate gratification."†

The play of little children is individual, while pre-adolescent play is social. It is a manifestation of the group spirit, which more and more dominates the child's thought until it culminates in the adolescent "gang" spirit. We find pre-adolescent children with similar tastes uniting in little

\*See Findlay; *The School*, Chap. V.

†Harris: *Psychologic Foundations of Education*.

groups or cliques. They go swimming and fishing together, play on the same team, and chum generally. Games are now fairly well organized and played according to rule, but without the same degree of co-operative team work that characterizes the games of adolescents. Boys and girls no longer play together. In fact, they are frequently shy and uncomfortable in the presence of one another.

Dependence, frankness, faith, and credulity are characteristic of the primary stage, while the pre-adolescent is independent, self-centred, and strongly conscious of his own personality and his own importance in the world. He is no longer content to be led. He resents too much interference on the part of parents or teachers. If you would lead him you must interest him, and to interest him there must be something moving all the time. If nothing is moving he will set something in motion.

This is the age of adventure. The child has great admiration for physical prowess and daring. His heroes are people who have accomplished big things in the material world at the risk of life and limb. The deeds of soldiers of fortune, highway robbers, cowboys, explorers, and pioneers, —men of action everywhere—these appeal to his sense of adventure, and he emulates them in his play. At first the child's hero is an actual individual, some one in the world of grown-up folks, whose personality or occupation appeals to him, and in whose footsteps he intends to walk when he gets big; it may be a policeman, a street-car conductor, or the captain of a baseball team. Later, his reading and the

stories he hears determine his choice of heroes. There is little difference in this respect in the interests of boys and girls. Several studies in children's interests tend to show that girls are equally impressed with tales of romance and adventure, and have the same tendency as boys to idealize men and women who are famous in fact or fiction for heroic deeds performed.

Pre-adolescence appears to the observer of children to be a sort of matter-of-fact period. The little child is essentially a poet, but the pre-adolescent is rather prosaic in his outlook upon the world. This stage is sometimes called the Period of Stability, probably in contrast with the instability of early adolescence. I prefer to think of it as the Period of Acquisitiveness. The collecting instinct has now reached its optimal point. "Following the childhood period is what we may call the pre-adolescent period, from eight to eleven or twelve years. Here collections reach their height in quantity and genuineness. The crude instinct seems to develop into a more conscious interest. The interest is now directed, more purposeful, answers the call of inner needs more strongly. On the other hand we find the imitative element very strong at this period. . . . At this age, too, the 'possession' idea of childhood seems to develop into love of quantities. The largest collections come now."\* It is true that the objects collected are not always of intrinsic value, or of educational importance in themselves; but in-

\*Caroline Frear Burk; *The Collecting Instinct*; included in *Aspects of Child Life and Education* by Stanley Hall.

instincts are transferable, and there is no reason why the collector of birds' eggs should not become a collector of facts.

Memory also, is approaching the optimal point. Experimental studies show "that there is a gradual development of memory power from the age of eight to fourteen. From fourteen onward some investigators find only a slight improvement. It is probable that memory power remains fairly stationary from adolescence to the age of fifty and from then suffers a gradual decline"\* Psychologists tell us that an aptitude or capacity can be most economically nurtured and developed by exercise during the period of its natural development. Hence pre-adolescence is the golden age for gathering information, and for memory drills. The ability to memorize is much more efficient than is generally supposed. It is quite probable that children from eight to fourteen years of age are able to memorize from two thousand to three thousand lines of poetry or prose each year without undue effort; and scientific investigations on the rate of forgetting, made by Ebbinghaus, Thorndike, and others, prove that from fifteen to thirty per cent. of everything learned will remain permanently stored in the memory for life. This is no excuse for the common practice of requiring children to memorize useless stuff in so-called geography and history; nor for attempting to store their minds with good things which they cannot at present understand and appreciate, but which the teacher hopes will be reservoirs of utility and inspiration in the years to come.

\*Sandiford: *Mental and Physical Life of School Children*; Chap. IX.



It is rather a reason why great care should be taken to assure that all material of instruction is in harmony with the needs and interests of children in the period of life in which they are now living.

The following summary of the characteristics of pre-adolescent life will bring this chapter to a close. The reader is by no means recommended to accept Hall's theory of moral vaccination as set forth in the quotation. It is his enumeration of the tendencies, tastes, and interests of pre-adolescent children to which attention is solicited:\*

"As this period draws to a close and the teens begin, the average normal child will not be bookish but should read and write well, know a few dozen well-chosen books, play several dozen games, be well started in one or more ancient and modern languages, if these must be studied at all, should know something of several industries and how to make many things he is interested in, belong to a few teams and societies, know much about nature in his environment, be able to sing and draw, should have memorized much more than he now does, and be acquainted at least in story form with the outlines of many of the best works in literature and the epochs and persons in history. Morally he should have been through many if not most forms of what parents and teachers commonly call badness and Professor Yoder even calls meanness. He should have fought, whipped and been whipped, used language offensive to the prude and to the prim precisian, been in some scrapes, had something to

\*Hall: *Adolescence*; Vol. 2; Chap. XVI.

do with bad, if more with good associates, and been exposed to and already recovering from as many forms of ethical mumps and measles as, by having in mild form now he can be rendered immune to later when they become far more dangerous, because his moral and religious as well as his rational nature is normally rudimentary. He is not depraved but only in a savage or half-animal stage, although to the large-brained, large-hearted and truly parental soul that does not call what causes it inconvenience by opprobrious names, an altogether loyeable and fascinating stage. The more we know of boyhood the more narrow and often selfish do adult ideals of it appear. Something is amiss with the lad of ten who is very good, studious, industrious, thoughtful, altruistic, quiet, polite, respectful, obedient, gentlemanly, orderly, always in good toilet, docile to reason, who turns away from stories that reek with gore, prefers adult companionship to that of his mates, refuses all low associates, speaks standard English, or is pious and deeply in love with religious services as the typical maiden teacher or the *à la mode* parent wishes. Such a boy is either under-vitalized and anemic and precocious by nature, a repressed, overtrained, conventionalized mannikin, a hypocrite, as some can become under pressure thus early in life, or else, a genius of some kind with a little of all these."

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(See also list under Chapter II)

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## CHAPTER V

### THE PRE-ADOLESCENT PUPIL'S READING

Now that we have had a look at the child from nine to twelve or thirteen years of age, and may even presume to have made his acquaintance, we are surely in a better position to prescribe a literary diet for him than if we were unaware of his nature and his needs. A general acquaintance is all that can be expected, for he is not an individual but a class, and a class composed of individuals all of whom are different. Not only this, but every individual is constantly changing in the process of growth and adaptation to his own peculiar environment.

And, in attempting to guide and direct our pupil's reading, we shall do well to keep in mind not only his tastes and interests, but also his needs. The latter, however, will be found to have their origin in the former, and to grow out of them as a garden grows from seeds. But the care of the gardener is necessary in order that the garden may thrive. Nature sows the seeds of natural dispositions; and the teacher's skilful hand is busy nurturing and caring for the growing plants, plucking here and pruning there, providing fullest scope for the development of those plants which render the garden beautiful. We have gained a knowledge of our

pupil's tastes and interests and are ready to consider the kinds of literature which will best meet his needs, in order that his life may grow to richness and fullness, so far as literary culture is concerned.

Obviously, the characteristic forms of primary literature no longer appeal to him. It is true our boy and girl are still interested in the world of nature round about them, and they still view things objectively; but not with the poetic vision which was characteristic of early childhood. This is the age of concrete information, the time for learning facts. Hence it is in the form of natural history, nature study, elementary science—call it what you will—that such material now makes its strongest appeal. The pre-adolescent pupil can be no longer inspired by fantastic verses about stars, flowers and birds. He will appreciate a rest from this form of literature when the re-birth of adolescence provides him with a new poetic vision. And so one can sympathize with the teacher of the pupil in Grade VI, to whom such effusions as *The Flight of the Birds*, by Stedman, makes no appeal.

"Whither away, Robin,  
Whither away?  
Is it through envy of the maple leaf,  
Whose blushes mock the crimson of thy breast,  
Thou wilt not stay?"\*

Without discussing the literary merits (or demerits) of the verse, the point I wish to emphasize is that the fantastic

\*From *Alexandra Fourth Reader*, page 15.

style and the far-fetched figures of speech do not appeal to a Grade VI. pupil. He has passed the stage where fantasy will establish even a poetic relation between the color of the autumn leaves and the color of the robin's breast; he knows that the seasons are responsible for the migration of birds, and also for the blushes of the maple leaf. In this prosaic manner he reasons it out, and turns in distaste from the more poetic view which now seems childish and silly to him.

Similarly, the fairy-tales and nursery stories of the primary grades no longer appeal to the pupil. He doesn't believe in fairies and goblins now, and his prosaic mind is inclined to take things literally. If he has not already made the acquaintance of Cinderella, Tom Thumb, The Sleeping Beauty, Red Riding Hood, and the others; and if he has not travelled with Alice through Wonderland, and explored with her the world behind the Looking Glass, or been hurled with Dorothy and Toto into the Land of Oz, his primary education has been neglected and he has suffered an irreparable loss. His literary foundations have not been well laid, and cannot be rebuilt, for fantasy has now yielded sway to purposeful imagination. His inquiring mind now demands an explanation for everything. The content of the story must be reasonable, or if there is a hidden meaning it must be such as the mind can grasp and appreciate.

But how easy it is to explain to the pre-adolescent pupil that primitive and unenlightened peoples everywhere have tried to unveil the mysteries of existence, and to learn the meaning and history of the objects and forces of nature,

and that their simple naive guesses at the truth have crystallized themselves gradually into creation myths and stories of the romantic achievements of the gods and heroes; that: "To the ancients, the moon was not a lifeless body of stones and clods; it was the horned huntress Artemis, coursing through the upper ether, or bathing herself in the clear lake; or it was Aphrodite, protectress of lovers, born of the sea-foam in the East, near Cyprus. The clouds were not bodies of vaporized water; they were cows, with swelling udders, driven to the milking by Hermes, the summer wind; or great sheep with moist fleeces, slain by the unerring arrows of Bellerophon, the sun; or swan-maidens, flitting across the firmament; Valkyries hovering over the battle-field, to receive the souls of fallen heroes; or, again, they were mighty mountains, piled one above another, in whose cavernous recesses the divining-wand of the storm-god Thor revealed hidden treasures. The yellow-haired sun Phœbus drove westerly all day in his flaming chariot; or, perhaps, as Meleager, retired for a while in disgust from the sight of men, wedded at eventide the violet-light (Ænone, Iole) which he had forsaken in the morning; sank as Hercules upon a blazing funeral-pyre, or, like Agamemnon, perished in a blood-stained bath; or as the fish-god, Dagon, swam nightly through the subterranean waters to appear eastward again at daybreak. Sometimes Phæton, his rash, inexperienced son, would take the reins and drive the Solar chariot too near the earth, causing the fruits to perish, and the grass to wither, and the wells to dry up. Sometimes, too, the great

all-seeing divinity, in his wrath at the impiety of men, would shoot down his scorching arrows, causing pestilence to spread over the land."\*

The child's mind has passed recently through similar processes of inquiry, and many of his riddles have been solved, for the scientific knowledge of the ages is at his disposal. But he still retains a primitive sense of awe in the presence of the big things of nature and of human life. Hence he is interested in the primitive man's reveries, for they have been his own, and he has not yet reached the stage in his mental conquest of the world where familiarity breeds contempt. It should be mentioned in passing that the gods of mythology were real personalities to the mind of primitive man, and not mere manifestations of the different aspects of nature; and that it is not as nature study or history, but as *mere* literature that these stories should be presented.

This, then, is the golden age of mythology, in the literary life of our pupil. Already he is acquainted with some of the simpler myths. They have been told him by his primary teacher simply as wonder stories; but now he enters into the spirit of mythology. He takes pleasure in the primitive stories of the creation. The personality and power of the various divinities of Olympus and Asgard, and of the lesser gods of the earth and the underworld kindle his imagination and stir his feelings of admiration for heroic deeds. Even more interesting and impressive are the remarkable deeds of the heroes, who achieved such fame among men that they

\*Fiske: *Myths and Myth-Makers*.



were beloved by the gods and taken to Olympus to be made immortal.

If any further argument were necessary for the study of classic myths than intrinsic literary value and harmony with the needs of pre-adolescent children, it might be found in the fact that writers of all times, in both prose and poetry, have drawn so freely from mythology for literary material, and by way of allusions and references, that a knowledge of these sources forms a necessary basis for the proper appreciation of other forms of literature.

One hesitates to specify just which myths should be told to children in the various grades, or what books they should read for themselves. Speaking broadly, the more, the better; provided always, however, that the content of the story is in harmony with the requirements of real literature. But, as Plato pointed out in *The Republic*, we shall have to reject all myths which misrepresent the true nature of the gods and the heroes. "The binding of Hera by her son, and the hurling of Hephaistus from heaven by his father when his mother was being beaten and he tried to defend her, and all the tales of the battles of the giants that Homer has made, these stories we shall not receive into our city," says Plato; nor shall we receive them into our curriculum, but shall confine our choice of material to stories which truly portray the laws of life.

The teacher should have read translations of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, particularly the latter, and a good translation, such as Howland's, of Virgil's *Aeneid*. She should

be familiar with such works as Fiske's *Myths and Myth-Makers*; Bulfinch's *Mythology*; and Gayley's *Classic Myths in English Literature*. The pupil's reading should be from such books as Hawthorne's *Wonder Book* and *Tanglewood Tales*; Kingsley's *The Heroes*; Keary's *Heroes of Asgard*; Myra L. Pratt's *Myths of Old Greece*; M. B. Synge's *The World's Childhood*; and the various collections by Baldwin, Clarke, Guerber, and others, published in the *Eclectic School Readings* series.

The pre-adolescent pupil is interested in *actual* heroes as well as mythical ones; hence biography and the romance of history go hand in hand with mythology. The child is thrilled by tales of Jupiter, Apollo, Hercules, Jason, Ulysses, Siegfried, and other legendary gods and heroes; but he is equally thrilled by stories of Julius Caesar, Harold, Alfred, Richard, Joan of Arc, Raleigh, Columbus, Madeleine de Verchères, Laura Secord, Radisson, and Alexander Mackenzie. Selected readings should be made from Plutarch's *Lives*, and from the *Romance of Empire* series; Dickens' *Child's History of England* should be read and Parkman's *Romance of Canadian History*. There are innumerable sets of good history readers available, such as Arnold's *Gateways to History* and *The Cambridge Historical Readers*, which bring the young reader into spiritual contact with the lives of great men and women, and present in an interesting manner stories of heroic deeds which are worthy of admiration and emulation.

The teacher will realize that it is as literature rather than

history that this material is to be used ; that is, we are not so much concerned about the historical accuracy of the stories told and read, as we are concerned about the meaning of life itself. It is truth, rather than fact, that the stories should bring to the child. Hence large demands should be made at this age upon wholesome fiction of the heroic type ; not "historic fiction" only, but heroic fiction in general,—striking tales of vigorous action, and character truly revealed through action.

So many particular circumstances and conditions enter into the problem of choice of material that it is impossible in such a field as juvenile fiction to recommend the best course to be pursued. There is the matter of correlation with other subjects of study ; there are questions of previous reading, individual tastes, teacher's preferences, environment, etc.—all of which should be considered. I venture, however, to mention a few books of heroic fiction which every child should read: *Robinson Crusoe* (Defoe) ; *Swiss Family Robinson* (Wyss) ; *Scottish Chiefs* (Porter) ; *Westward Ho!* (Kingsley) ; *Treasure Island* (Stevenson) ; *Ben-Hur* (Wallace) ; *Two Years Before the Mast* (Dana) ; a number of Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales*, and perhaps Scott's *Ivanhoe* and *The Talisman*, although Scott's descriptive passages may be a little beyond pre-adolescent powers of appreciation. A few other standard books of children's fiction which should be read are: *The Hoosier School-Boy* (Eggleston) ; *Story of a Bad Boy* (Aldrich) ; *Tom Brown's School Days* (Hughes) ; *Stalky & Co* (Kipling) ;

*Heidi* (Spyri); *A Dog of Flanders* (Ramée); *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (Burnett), and the juvenile stories written by Louisa M. Alcott and by Mrs. Ewing.

It seems a pity from the standpoint of literature, that we have practically excluded the Bible and Bible stories from our schools; for the Old Testament contains exactly the type of epic material which we have been recommending for pre-adolescent children, while the literary style of the Bible was the acknowledged model of such masters of English as Ruskin and Matthew Arnold, and is universally recognized as literature in its purest and most exalted form. But narrow-minded, religious prejudices and sectarian differences have combined to rob the child of his birthright, and there appears to be no way out of the difficulty, for teachers themselves are not always free from sectarian prejudices. The problem has been thoroughly discussed, and is still being discussed, by educators everywhere. In a number of the American States the question has been argued in the courts, and the position maintained that since the Bible contains doctrinal passages upon which various creeds are based, its use in state schools "has a tendency to inculcate sectarian ideas, and falls therefore, within the prohibition of the constitution and the statutes."\* We referred in a previous chapter to the fact that where the home has failed the school has an extra duty to perform. Here, the conditions are reversed; the school has

\*Quoted by Nicholas Butler in *Religious Instruction and its Relation to Education*, from Wisconsin Supreme Court Reports. See also Munroe's *Cyclopaedia of Education* under *Bible in Schools*.

failed, and the home and the church have an extra duty to perform. We are not discussing religious education, but making a plea for Old Testament Stories as a part of the literary training of pre-adolescent children. This is the time when spectacular scenes like the fight between David and Goliath, Joseph in the pit, and Daniel in the lion's den make their deepest impression; the time when the child will admire and emulate such vigorous, heroic characters as Abraham, Moses, and David. It is unnecessary to add that these stories are true representations of life. That child's education has been neglected who does not realize the principle of the inevitable results of disobedience to law in the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden; the virtues of goodwill and harmony, generosity towards the weak, hospitality and love, in the stories associated with the lives of Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph; and of courage, loyalty, and fair-mindedness in the story of David; who does not see in the story of Samson the tragedy of a strong man who, nevertheless, made a failure of life, or in Absalom, a lad of great promise, whose failure to realize his duty as a son resulted in his own destruction, and broke his father's heart. Nowhere in all literature is there such a combination of striking episodes and unique personalities, and nowhere is life so truly portrayed.

Pre-adolescent *poetry* also, should be largely of the heroic type. There is an almost unlimited supply of good rousing ballads to which school literature, unfortunately, pays comparatively little attention. True, the old narrative ballad

cannot be considered a high type of poetry, but it tells a good story, and tells it with charm and vigor. It must be remembered too, that the pre-adolescent mind is not a highly poetic type of mind, and that literature selections should be chosen with due regard for the dominant characteristics of child life. The various Robin Hood ballads (particularly *A Gest of Robyn Hode*); the story of Percy's hunting in the mountains of Cheviot; *Johnny Armstrong*; and *Sir Patrick Spens*, are samples of good, old narrative ballads. Of course, a larger demand should be made upon more modern ballads, most of which reflect the lyric note as well. Without attempting any particular classification or order, and using the term in a very general way, with reference to content rather than form, the following list of poems will indicate the type of material: *Lucy Gray*; *Alice Fell*; *Casabianca*; *The Wreck of the Hesperus*; *The Inchcape Rock*; *Lord Ullin's Daughter*; *The Miller of the Dee*; *The Skeleton in Armor*; *Alice Brand*; *Alan-a-Dale*; *Jack o' Hazeldean*; *Rosabelle*; *Incident of the French Camp*; *Hohenlinden*; *Lochinvar*; *The Burial of Sir John Moore*; *John Gilpin*; *The Ancient Mariner*. Of the longer narrative poems, the pupil might read and enjoy a number of the *Lays of Ancient Rome* (particularly *Horatius*); *The Island of the Scots*; some of the *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, and perhaps *The Courtship of Miles Standish*. Such poems as *Enoch Arden* and *The Idylls of the King* are unsuited to pre-adolescent life.

Ballads, odes, and lyric poems and songs which perpetuate

the fame of national heroes, recall striking historic events, or commemorate national holidays are enthusiastically received at this age; and in addition to their suitability as literature they tend to bridge the apparent gap between this subject and the other subjects of the school curriculum, and to show that literature is in reality a natural outgrowth of human experience, and the fittest expression of human emotions.

Unfortunately Canada has no great national poetry. Probably it is not too much to state that we have hardly yet developed a distinctive national consciousness to find expression in poetry. How much the splendid contribution of our citizen-soldiers will do for us in this respect remains to be seen. The fact that the one great war poem *In Flanders Fields* was written by a Canadian is a source of inspiration, and I think we may look forward confidently to the near future for some kindred spirit to give poetic expression to our national life. In the meantime a few poems of distinctly Canadian sentiment by such writers as Wilfred Campbell, Archibald Lampman, Jean Blewett, Duncan Campbell Scott, and Charles G. D. Roberts, even if mediocre in literary merit, might well be included in elementary school literature.

But we are British as well as Canadian, and it is with British ideals, expressed in English literature, wherever written, that we wish to inspire our pupils,—such productions as: *Scots Wha Hae*; *Men of Harlech*; *The Charge of the Light Brigade*; *Ye Mariners of England*; *The Revenge*;

*Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington; Waterloo* from *Childe Harold*, etc., and, to give a chastened, sober tone to patriotism, we might well add *The Recessional*.

Little has been said in this chapter in favor of purely imaginative and descriptive poetry. The child no longer looks at nature with poetic wonder, nor has he reached the stage when he can hear in nature "the still, sad music of humanity"—or feel the *Presence* which inspired Wordsworth "with a joy of elevated thoughts." But he looks at nature with the inquiring, prosaic mind of the pre-adolescent. And so, as was stated at the beginning of the chapter, "he will appreciate a rest from this form of literature, until the re-birth of adolescence provides him with a new poetic vision." I have carefully tested children in this regard and am fully convinced that my observations are in accordance with the characteristics of child life. Even such beautiful selections as Wordsworth's *Daffodils*, Tennyson's *Bugle Song*, and Bryant's *Waterfowl*, do not always appeal to children in the senior grades of the public school.

The same may be said of poems which reflect sentiments characteristic of the adolescent and adult mind, such as religion, love, and the deeper emotions of life. For this reason we excluded *Enoch Arden* and *The Idylls of the King* from our list of narrative poems, and expressed a doubt about the suitability of *Miles Standish*. The same doubt would apply to prose works like Dickens' *Christmas Carol* and *The Old Curiosity Shop*. The episode from the latter dealing with the death of Little Nell seems to be



a favorite with the makers of public school readers, but even this fact is not sufficient proof of its suitability. And because Dickens is dealing with a child tragedy, it does not naturally follow that the result is child literature. In fact this particular scene is decidedly adult in its conception, and even then perhaps a little over-wrought in emotional appeal.

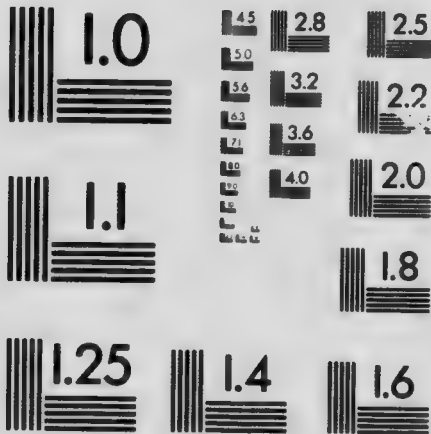
We have argued insistently from the beginning that literature reflecting abstract ideals of life and conduct does not belong to the pre-adolescent period. Concrete illustrations of social and moral relations,—the domestic virtues, filial affection, consideration for others, and good will towards all, veneration for nobility, and pride in native land, all find a natural place in public school literature. The ethical element should be prominent, but it should be presented in the form of literature (art) and not ethics; that is, the moral elements should be inherent in the literature, and not attached from without; there should be no sermonizing and no direct searching for the ethical lesson that the literature teaches.

Clark Wissler, in his study of children's interests in the reading work of elementary schools, gives the results of careful experiments with 2000 pupils between the ages of eight and fifteen attending the elementary schools in the State of Indiana to show what types of lessons from the school readers are remembered with enjoyment the following year. His conclusions are convincing: The complete story and not the extract; the natural life-like selection



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which can be understood and appreciated without help, with practically no difference between the interests of boys and girls. "The mere instructive lesson; the moral and its setting; abstract poems concerning duty, happiness, love of nature, etc., make up five per cent. or less of the bulk of those remembered."\* Yet it would be fairly safe to conjecture if the Indiana State Readers, to which the test was applied, are of the orthodox type, that they make up thirty per cent. or more of the bulk of those read!

In this chapter we have drawn freely from a very excellent treatise on the teaching of English by Percival Chubb; and we close the chapter by quoting from this text a paragraph which summarizes in a clear and convincing manner the literary requirements of pre-adolescent pupils:

"It is this literature of the distinctly epic type that will interest him more than any other, and be good for him. This is our best clew. Adventure and romance, heroism and daring, the wonders and excitement of travel and exploration, of march and siege,—upon these we may feed him; and upon these as sure foundations of the superstructure to be raised in later years, we may build. So we shall broaden his world and enlarge his sympathies, and give him a many-sided interest in all sorts and conditions of men and women, and in various callings and points of view, before he begins that adolescent work of introspection and self-analysis which tends to contract for a time his interests

\*Quoted by Sandiford in *Mental and Physical Life of School Children*; Chap. XIII.

and sympathies. Above all, we shall surround him with a cloud of witnesses to the glory of courage and nobility; we shall give him the companionship of the great, and the friendship of the true and tried, to win him to their likeness."\*

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## CHAPTER VI

### THE TEACHING OF READING

It is a matter of common observation that no subject of the elementary school curriculum receives more time and no subject is more poorly taught than the subject of reading. In the senior grades of many schools it is not taught at all; it is merely *heard*. In the primary grades so much attention is paid to word-naming, generally by phonic synthesis, and to other mechanical elements of the problem that the problem itself is lost sight of by both teacher and pupils. Another cause for the unsatisfactory nature of the teaching of reading is the tradition, amounting almost to fetichism, that oratory, so-called, is the aim of teaching reading. Thus we find a popular New England reader of the good old days of log schoolhouses, split-log benches, and birch switches bearing the significant name of the "*Columbian Orator*." Old log buildings with their defective lighting and uncomfortable benches have disappeared; the "birch" has at least given place to the harmless rubber "strap," and this is fast disappearing from civilized communities; but oratory, as the ultimate end of teaching how to read, still remains. The significance of the fact that books are now so common and so cheap that they are available for



all, and that practically all reading outside of the school-room is silent reading, has not yet penetrated that last, great stronghold of conservatism, the school.

The problem of word-recognition looms like a great mountain before the eyes of the primary teacher, completely shutting off her view of the fields beyond. Day after day, and week after week, the monotonous grind continues. First, it appears, the phonic elements must be mastered, in spite of the fact that English is not a phonetic language, that twenty-six letters are set to do the work of something like fifty distinct sounds, and that considerably more than one hundred and fifty different combinations of these twenty-six symbols are employed in representing these sounds.

It is little wonder that phonic worshippers have found it necessary to invent all kinds of silly little games, and to use all kinds of peculiar and irrelevant devices in the hopeless effort to solve such a problem. The letter "M" makes a noise like a cow in the stable; short "I" makes a noise like the little boy's mother does when he is naughty, and "T" makes a noise like a steam-engine. Place them together,—the cow, the mother, and the engine, and behold, a rug for the floor! Was Hindoo magician ever capable of such sleight-of-hand performance? One primer hits upon the happy plan of sending the beginner in reading to visit his cousins on the farm, where he hears the cow say "M," the dog say "R," the goose say "S," and so on throughout the farm-yard.

Lest, to the reader unacquainted with fashionable methods in primary reading, such vaudeville performances may appear to be the product of my own imagination, which, by the way, is entirely incapable of such flights, I quote the following extracts from popular treatises on the subject:\*

## I

"One day, while walking in the orchard, I heard a sound like this (giving sound of "m"). What do you think it was?" Some may say "a train", others "a mill," and likely some will suggest "the bees." "Yes, it was the bees." (Here allow the children to make the *hum*). "These busy little things were flying in and out of houses shaped like these:

∩ ∩ ∩

(Let the children draw them on their slates).

"But then these little bee-hives were quite close together like this:

∩∩∩

(Let the class draw the same).

"And by these three beehives was a smaller one turned upside down and then they all looked like this:

m

Now what sound do the busy bees make? Well, that is what this little letter says." (Let the class collectively and individually tell what "m" says).

\*See Morang's *Phonic Manual*, page 5.

## II

## GAME

Purpose.—To learn how sounds are made.

T. We are going to play the "How to talk" game.

Make a sound with your throat like the dog makes when he growls.

C. r-r-r-r-r.

T. What sound does he make when he pants?

C. h-h-h-h.

T. Open your mouth wide, breathe out, and make a sound like this, *ha*.

C. ha.

T. Make a sound with your lips like the *puff puff* of the engine.

C. p-p-p-p.

T. Look in the looking-glass, and make the *puff puff* sound again, and tell me what you do with your lips.

C. I put them together and open them.

T. Make a hissing sound like a snake.

C. s-s-s-s.

T. Look in the mirror. Make the sound again. Tell me what you do with your teeth.

C. I put them almost together.

T. Make a sound like the ticking of the watch.

C. t-t-t.

T. Look in the mirror, etc., etc.\*

After the phonic elements have been mastered and have been combined, more or less in accordance with the mathematical law of permutations and combinations, to form such groups as mat, sat, pat, tam, tat, tap, pat, pam, pap,—some

\*See *Phonics Made Easy*, page 7.

of which actually occur in the English language, and some of which do not, a further process of synthesis takes place, and such groups as the following are placed on the black-board to form the first foundations of a course in English literature:

"Pat had a spat with a fat cat."

"Hit the brat with a flat slat."

It is not that the teacher has any conscious literary or ethical aims in presenting such material, but her choice of words must be based upon the phonic elements, already taught, so that the reading lesson may serve as a review for the previous lessons in phonics. Also, only the few idioms, (that is, words which are not phonetic) without which sentences cannot be formed, have been mastered by sight, and so the choice of material is limited. But as the aim seems to be word-recognition and word-naming, regardless of the thought conveyed, or whether any thought is conveyed at all, the limitation is no handicap, but rather a blessing in disguise.

How are we to correct all this? Surely by the application of common sense and a few principles of psychology.

Let us look more closely at the meaning of reading. The word has its origin in the Anglo-Saxon "raedan," to advise. The Latin synonym is "legere," the literal meaning of which is, to pick up, or to gather. Reading then, is taking counsel or gathering thought from a book. The little child who reads, goes to the printed page as he would go to the feet of a story-teller, or, in the expressive language of a delight-

ful little girl of six: "Reading is finding stories in books." It is our only means of holding communion with the author in his absence; and the understanding and appreciation of his thoughts is our aim.

In the grammar lesson the teacher maintains that the unit of language is a sentence, for a sentence is the expression of a single thought. But in the primary reading lesson she abandons her logical reasoning and substitutes a word, or a letter, or what she calls "a sound," that is, a phonic symbol, for the unit of language. Either this, or she takes upon herself the responsibility of dividing the unit. But a unit is a single individual, one and indivisible. Now if reading is gathering thought from written symbols, and the unit of thought is a sentence, then a sentence is the unit in reading. Therefore, the child's first experience in reading, whether it come at the beginning of his course or after six months spent in the pursuit of phonic symbols, is in the mastery of a sentence.

But, argues the devotee of phonics, a sentence is made up of words, and words are made up of letter symbols. This is true in the same sense that a chair is made up of seat, back, legs, etc., and these are made of wood. A little pile of wood contains the latent possibilities of a chair; legs, rungs, seat, and back, if properly put together, form a chair, but a chair is a unit, and the elements which go to form it are different things entirely from the unit itself, just as hydrogen and oxygen have characteristics and properties peculiar to themselves until they are combined in

a certain definite manner, when each loses its identity in the formation of water. Similarly letter symbols lose their identity when they become words, and words lose their individual significance when they are built into sentences.

Reading is a sort of four-fold problem. At least it comprises the association of four elements, three of which, however, are involved in the process of oral language which the child has thoroughly mastered before he enters school. That is to say, he has a considerable stock of concepts, and he has associated with these concepts certain sounds, which we call language, and certain muscular images of the vocal organs which he employs in making these sounds. These three elements,—the concept, the auditory image, and the motor image, are so closely associated that when any one appears before consciousness the other two will be recalled automatically. The specific problem of learning to read may be considered to be merely the addition of a fourth factor to the group of associations already formed; namely, the visual image of the symbols on the printed or written page.

If three out of the four elements involved in the process of reading have been mastered by the child, during the second and third years of his life, in learning to talk, surely nature's method of teaching children to talk should hold valuable suggestions for the teacher of reading. The child's first intelligent utterance is a sentence. True, it is considerably abbreviated and not well articulated, and its interpretation depends to a considerable extent upon tone and gesture,

but it is a sentence nevertheless, in that it is the expression of a thought. When the infant cries, "Dink, dink!", he means "I want a drink." No one will argue that he first masters such elements as the sounds of "d", "i", "n", and "k", and later synthesizes these to form the expression "dink", which the mother interprets as "I want a drink". The child does not learn to talk by phonic synthesis, and he does not learn to read by phonic synthesis, the opinions of many primary experts notwithstanding. The child learns to talk by talking, and he learns to read by reading.

The process of association is the same wherever it is found. "Any fact thought of will call up that fact, the thought of which has accompanied or followed it, or a part of it most frequently, most recently, in the most vivid experience and with the most resultant satisfaction, and which is most closely connected with the general set of the mind at the time."\* Lack of space forbids a detailed examination of this law in relation to the teaching of reading; but the application can be made by the reader himself. Suffice it to say that all reading material should be of vital interest to the pupil; the teacher should put her whole soul into the work and teach with vigor and energy; frequent reviews should be held; and each recitation should be satisfying to the child; that is, he should feel that he has accomplished something worth while—found a story in a book, if you like.

Rousseau's *Émile* offers some sound advice in this regard.

\*Thorndike: *Elements of Psychology*, page 249.

(Methods in reading were formal and mechanical in the Eighteenth Century, as they are to-day). His comment on learning to read is so significant, even after the proper discount has been made for his characteristic exaggerations, that his words are well worth quoting here. They are as follows.

"A great ado has been made about finding the best methods of teaching children to read. Cabinets and charts have been invented and the child's apartment has been turned into a printing-office. Locke would have him learn to read by means of dice. Was not that a happy invention? What useless effort! A surer means than all these, and one which is always forgotten, is the desire to learn. Give the child this desire, and you may lay aside your cabinets and dice. Every method will be a good one.

"Present interest is the grand motive power, the only one which leads with certainty to great results. Émile sometimes receives from his parents, relatives or friends, notes of invitation for a dinner, a walk, a boat-ride, or to see some public entertainment. These notes, are short, clear, concise, and well written. Some one must be found to read them to him, and this person is either not always to be found at the right moment, or he is as little disposed to accommodate the child as the child was to please him the evening before. In this way the moment passes and the occasion is lost. Finally the note is read to him, but it is too late. Ah! if one could read for himself! Other notes are received. How short they are! How interesting the matter is! The child would make an attempt to decipher them, and at one time finds some help and at another meets with refusal. Finally, after a great effort, the half of one note is deciphered, and it speaks of going out to eat cream to-morrow, but



where or with whom, no one knows. What an effort is now made to read the rest of the note! I do not believe that Emile has need of a cabinet."

Since the sensations which give rise to the mental operation of reading have their origin in stimuli to the optic nerve endings, a study of the work of the eyes in reading should throw considerable light on the nature of the process. This field has been thoroughly investigated by experimental psychologists and it has been fully demonstrated that the eyes always traverse the page line by line and in a succession of quick movements and pauses from left to right. When a line is finished the eyes sweep back without interruption to a point near the beginning of the next line. The average time occupied by a forward sweep of the eyes is in the neighborhood of one-fortieth of a second, while the duration of the eye pauses is about ten times as great. Hence nine-tenths of the reading time is spent in gazing fixedly at the page. From three to six or seven pauses are made in a line of ordinary print, depending upon the length of the line and the familiarity of the subject-matter. The eye movements are so rapid that it stands to reason no distinct visual impressions are possible except during the reading pauses. Since one impression only, is possible during one pause, and there are, on the average, only four or five pauses to a line, it must be seen that natural reading cannot be by the recognition of individual words. Furthermore, photographs of tracings on smoked paper, showing the location and duration of eye

sweeps and pauses during natural reading, demonstrate the fact that the pauses do not at all coincide with the individual words on the line.

A common instrument in the psychological laboratory, known as the tachistoscope, reveals the fact that easy words can be read as quickly as single letters, and that small groups of words making sense can be read almost as quickly as single words, and far more quickly than the sum total of the time required to read the individual words. The explanation is that the mind grasps these complex groups as units, just as a house is recognized as a whole without taking into account the bricks, windows, doors, etc. One may afterwards analyze the total form into its component parts; but we do not do this in actual reading any more than in regarding a landscape. And when analysis does take place, it is certain striking, dominant parts that are first perceived, and not the parts in the order of their occurrence. For instance, certain unimportant letters may be omitted from words, or unimportant words from groups, without interfering with the reading process. This is the case even when the original acquaintance with words and groups of words symbolizing thought was by synthesis of letters (the alphabetic method) or of sounds (the phonic method) to form words, and by synthesis of words to form sentences. But surely it corroborates the statement already made, that the sentence method is the natural method of learning to read! If thought groups are later to be recognized as wholes, it would appear that

the teacher would be working in accordance with nature's method to begin with wholes.

Commenting on these facts, Professor Huey, in his *Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*, says of phonic synthesis:

"Granting the care and completeness with which the method has been worked out, and the success with which it has met in the 'mastery of word-structure and word-calling' it must be pronounced intensely artificial and adult in its conceptions, and destructive of right habits of reading and of using language generally. The phonic elements are made to precede the word, the word is made to precede the idea, and the sentence comes last of all, just the opposite of the natural procedure. Besides, to burden the young pupil with the cumbersome technique of such a method and to so fill his mind with the dead products of adult analysis is a crime against childhood which cannot long be suffered. Even in perfectly attaining its ideal it has not taught the child to *read*, and is most likely to permanently unfit him for intelligent, natural reading."\*

This is a vigorous denunciation, but it is based upon scientific facts, demonstrated and verified by some of the world's greatest psychologists, whose experiments in the psychological laboratory are nowadays bringing to light a fund of exact information which will shortly elevate pedagogy to the rank of a comparatively exact science.

It would be a mistake to attempt to specify to the teacher exactly how she is to put into practice the various principles referred to above; for exact rules of procedure are always in

\*Huey: *Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*, Part III, page 283.

danger of interfering with the personality of a teacher and the vigor and spontaneity of her work. But, to avoid any possible misapprehension, it should be stated clearly that phonics has a place, though a minor one, in the teaching of primary reading. Its function is partly as an aid in the problem of word-recognition, and partly as a means of securing clear, accurate, and cultured pronunciation and articulation. Also, there is a place for word drills; they should be held daily. But the teacher would do well to separate her phonic lessons and word drills from the regular reading lesson. The teaching of phonics, too, should be by analysis of words, and the teaching of individual words by the analysis of simple groups taken from larger units, that is, from stories, which hold a vital interest for the pupils. And it is surprising how much of this work the pupils can do for themselves!

So far we have considered only the problem of the mastery of the symbols on the printed page and the translation of them into living thought. It remains to consider briefly how, and to what extent, the teacher can train her pupils in the art of oral expression. Or, to state it concisely, we have considered the problem of silent reading, and have now before us the problem of oral reading.

The importance of having children read aloud is generally recognized by teachers, and, in fact, overrated; but its purpose is not always clearly understood. The practice is followed largely on account of custom and tradition. The teacher *hears* the pupils read in succession, sometimes even

in chorus. Mary may read from where John left off; or, if John's performance is not very satisfactory, she may re-read the part. What is the motive? what is the aim? to whom are they reading, or why are they reading aloud?—these are questions to which I have frequently failed to receive intelligent answers from teachers.

There appear to me to be two fundamental reasons for oral reading in schools. First, actual articulation is always a prominent factor in the process of reading; one might almost say in the process of thought-getting, for at least a sort of ghost of an inner speech is invariably present, even in the most rapid silent reading. Secondly, vocal expression reflects most accurately the reader's understanding of the thought. It is therefore, the natural test of literary appreciation.

If oral reading is the expression of living thought and feeling, then the degree of excellence of the oral reading is synonymous with the degree to which the reader has entered into the thought and feeling of the selection, and holds it suspended in his mind while he gives it expression in natural speech. Of course there is an art of voice control,—the placing of tones, correct breathing, etc.; but these things belong to speech in general and have no special application to the problem of reading. Similarly, there is great need for training in clear enunciation and articulation, and in the cultured use of oral language generally. But we are not considering the problem of language training. We are considering merely the oral expression of thought and

feeling, gathered by the interpretation of symbols on the printed page. We take for granted that the reader can speak properly and pleasantly, and with grace and persuasion; and we maintain that the qualities of natural speech are the qualities of good reading.

Furthermore, if a child has mastered the thought of a selection in literature, has made it his own, and wishes to convey it to another, surely there is nothing to stand in his way of giving clear, forceful, and feeling expression to his own thoughts; unless, perchance, he is tongue-tied, or stammers, or has some other organic defect! Some authorities go further than this and maintain that the child voice is naturally a beautiful voice, but that its beauty is frequently killed in the mechanical and monotonous grinds that usually accompany the reading lesson. The following statement is made by a teacher and writer of note, one who has devoted a great deal of time and attention to the problems of clear speaking and good reading, and is himself a master in the art:

"It is true, first of all, that children, little children, have beautiful voices? To this there would seem to be but one answer. The voice may soon be killed, as may the character of which it is one of the exponents; but on the whole it may be said that *the child-voice is a beautiful voice*. It is a voice full of honesty, naïveté, of emotion, of pathos. And it is usually accompanied by a good command of intonation and by an astonishing wealth of gesture.

"Now, not to make too long a matter of it, *this voice*, notwithstanding all the necessary changes, *should in its main*

*characteristics be preserved or recalled.* It is a shame to rob the child of it by teaching him how he is to read. He knows just as well as we do how he is to read, and if he were wise enough he would resent being 'taught'. He may be grateful (poor soul) for help over long words, for correct pronunciation of vowels, for rules about clear articulation. But am I to set about teaching a child how to inflect his voice when he pities a dead robin, or when he exclaims at a flash of lightning, or shudders or clasps his hands over the thunder? when he thanks me for an unexpected toy, or when he preaches a sermon to his counterpane? when he exhorts or threatens his soldiers or his brother, or when he calls his nurse or his sister wicked names? The child knows it all better than I do. If any one is to be teacher it is he. I stand by while he gives me lesson after lesson in intonation and gesture. He has used his imitative power to soak himself with his small experiences. How much he has gained by inheritance who shall say? but not empty-handed has he come into the world."\*

This quotation is worthy of a second glance, particularly as it supports the view that reading is a mental problem; that, once the content is mastered, the natural expression follows as a matter of course. 'Am I to set about teaching a child how to inflect his voice when he pities a dead robin?' Certainly not! The time when I could enter into a child-like understanding and appreciation of that famous wedding-feast which was so rudely interrupted by the Cuckoo, and resulted in the tragic death of Cock Robin because the Sparrow's aim was not good and he shot in a fright, has

\*From *Clear Speaking and Good Reading*, by Arthur Burrell, formerly Principal of the Borough Road Training College for Teachers.

long since passed. I can sympathize with you in the loss of a human friend, particularly if I have experienced a similar loss; but I have no *real* pity for Cock Robin, and so I am not qualified to demonstrate to a child how the story should be read. He knows it all better than I do! In fact, any attempt on my part to express pity for a dead robin would be little short of shallow imitation and pretence; but the child's expression is natural and spontaneous, for such experiences belong to the world in which he lives.

If we examine the elements of vocal expression—time, tone, emphasis, etc., we shall arrive at the same conclusion: namely, that reading is a mental process, for the factors involved are mental factors. Consider the TIME element, for example. By this I do not mean the general rate at which persons read; for it is the nature of some people to think, and speak, and read quickly, while others are slower and more deliberate. I mean the amount of time which the natural reader gives to a word or group of words, compared with the time apportioned to other parts of the content. A little reflection will show that the relative time given to a word or group represents the reader's judgment of the relative importance of the part. I read a group slowly, or I pause at the end of a group, to enable the mind to dwell upon the thought; to grasp its meaning, to visualize the picture in the imagination, or to give an opportunity for the emotions to be aroused. It is purely and simply a mental process, with no mechanical elements involved.

It might be mentioned in passing that the natural grouping



in oral expression is entirely independent of the punctuation of the sentence in print. Punctuation points indicate grammatical structure and are of the utmost importance in thought-getting, but they have nothing to do with thought-expression. If the reader has any doubt in this matter let him go to some serious text,—one of Shakespeare's plays, for instance, and read a few passages aloud following the punctuation points as a guide to his grouping in oral expression, and note how mechanical and lacking in thought his rendering becomes.

Similarly it might be pointed out that the modulation of the voice represents the various shades of thought and feeling expressed. Notice, for example, that *five* distinct shades of meaning may be represented by different intonations in the following sentence: "Are you interested in the psychology of reading?" Mental tension is revealed in oral expression by the rising inflection of the voice. The cause for this, is, of course, physical tension of the vocal organs, caused by motor-nerve "tension," which in turn is caused by mental tension. Then how ridiculous to ask a child to raise his voice at a certain place and to lower it at another, or to ask him to put more expression into his voice!

Faulty expression is merely an indication of faulty appreciation. If a child reads in a dreary monotone, it means that he is not thinking what he reads; if the modulation of his voice is unnatural or his emphasis wrongly placed, it indicates his failure to appreciate truly the various shades

of the author's thought and feeling. On the other hand, the good reader is the one who identifies himself with the thought and spirit of the selection he is rendering, and so gives it the natural, spontaneous expression of ordinary speech.

It follows from what has been said that good reading on the part of a pupil does not consist in imitation of the teacher; but it does *not* follow that there is no legitimate place for the teacher's reading. Certainly the teacher should not set herself up as a model to be copied, but, if she is a good reader, and particularly if she possesses a well-trained, musical voice, her own rendition may frequently be found to be the best means possible of leading her pupils into a fuller understanding, and a deeper appreciation of the thought and feeling of a piece of literature. This is especially true in a case where the selection contains certain delicate, subtle shades of imagination and emotion which not only defy analysis, but are apt to lose their beauty and significance when held up to the mirror of cold logic. Take for example, the sentiment of James Whitcomb Riley's *Brook Song*, the first stanza of which reads as follows:

Little Brook! Little Brook!  
You have such a happy look—

Such a very merry manner as you curve and swerve and  
crook—

And your ripples, one and one,  
Reach each other's hands and run,  
Like laughing little children in the sun.

Surely the teacher would be well advised to avoid any attempt to analyze the imaginative figures and the tone of blithesomeness reflected in such a verse! This is a case where the qualities of her voice and the expression of her face constitute the surest guides to literary appreciation.

The general procedure in the reading lesson, however, will be to allow the pupils to read the selection carefully and thoughtfully, and to ask questions of the teacher regarding meanings of unfamiliar words or allusions or any obscurities in the thought. After all manifest difficulties have been cleared up and the selection re-read, the teacher may, by the use of a few judicious questions, lead the pupil into a deeper appreciation of the thought and spirit of the selection. But it is not until after the content has been thoroughly mastered and has become a part of the reader himself, that he can reasonably expect to give it clear, forceful, and natural expression.

A class of Grade III pupils were reading a delightful little story of the life-history of a drop of water. They were reading it in a superficial, mechanical manner; watching the punctuation points, and trying to read with expression. They had been previously drilled in the pronunciation of the words, but were quite oblivious to the necessity of gathering thought and seeing pictures in the mind's eye. They were asked to re-read silently the following extract:

Up among the hills there is a dell where a headlong little stream rests for a moment, after leaping from the rocks above, before it hurries on towards the sea.

It rests in a deep pool, so clear that you can see the pebbles at the bottom; and, when the sun shines, the little fish cast a shadow on the white stones.

Then the thought was reviewed, during which process it was necessary for the pupils to re-read the part a half-dozen times, for they had not been trained in thought gathering. It was found that not one pupil in the class had a clear concept of "dell"; yet it occurred to no one to ask the teacher to explain the difficulty. Correct pronunciation and fluency, or rather flippancy, in word-naming appeared to be all that was required. But in due time the content was mastered and the pretty picture visualized in the imagination. One child volunteered to draw it on the blackboard. He was not an artist, by any means, but his sketch, and particularly his interpretation of his sketch, showed that he saw the picture as it was described on the page. Then he was asked to convey his appreciation of the picture to the other pupils in the language of the book, and his reading was beautiful; it would not be improved upon; it was PERFECT.

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## CHAPTER VII

### THE TEACHING OF LITERATURE

In the last chapter we dealt in a general way with method in reading. Much of what has been said applies with equal significance to the teaching of literature, for these two subjects are so inter-dependent and interwoven that the one does not exist without the other. In fact they are pretty much one and the same thing. Both are concerned with understanding and appreciation of thought expressed in language. Reading has a broader meaning than literature, as was pointed out in Chapter I. But while it is true that all reading is not literature, it is equally true that all literature *is* reading. Any difference in the use of the two terms must be understood as signifying merely a difference in emphasis. Reading is the *process* by which one arrives at an appreciation of literature; and oral reading is, therefore, the natural test of literary appreciation. The art of reading has no virtue in itself; it is merely a means to an end, and only by a realization of the end can the means be justified.

The rational method of presenting literature to a class depends primarily upon the aim and purpose of the par-

ticular selection which is being treated. Ruskin's "good book of the hour" will be treated differently from his book "of all time." "These bright accounts of travels; good-humored and witty discussions of question; lively or pathetic story-telling in the form of novel; firm fact-telling, by the real agents concerned in the events of passing history;—all these books of the hour, multiplying among us as education becomes more general, are a peculiar characteristic and possession of the present age; we ought to be entirely thankful for them, and entirely ashamed of ourselves if we make no good use of them."\* But they must not be allowed to usurp the place in reading nor the careful, analytic method of treatment which belongs only to books of all time;—books which were written, "not to multiply the voice, merely, but to preserve it." "Some books," says Bacon, "are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few are to be chewed and digested."

Furthermore, all true literature, all inspired writing or "scripture" does not lend itself to the same treatment. A story will be read more rapidly, and with less study, than a sober essay. A narrative poem or ballad will be treated more lightly than a lyric or an ode. The method of treatment will vary, too, with the age and attainments of the pupil. In fact there are many productions of art so great, so simple and so universal, that they are equally suitable for presentation to children of all ages. This is particularly true of lyric poetry. Shakespeare's *Under the Greenwood*

\*See Ruskin: *Sesame and Lilies*, Lecture I.

*Tree*, or *Where the Bee Sucks*; Tennyson's *Owl*, or *Bugle Song*, and Browning's *Song from Pippa Passes*, have each a message and a thrill of joy for childhood, youth, and maturity alike. But the lyric appeal naturally grows and develops and becomes more and more significant as life and experience widen and deepen from early childhood to maturity. And so, also, the method of treatment will vary accordingly. The *Bugle Song*, for example, or Bryant's *Water Fowl* may be enjoyed by children for their music and their imagery; while adolescents and adults will feel the deeper moral significance of the poems, and have a fuller appreciation of their poetic qualities.

We were careful, in our discussion of method in reading, to avoid formulating any exact rules for the teacher to follow, lest they interfere with the vigor and spontaneity of her work. The caution is even more applicable to the teaching of literature. Here definite rules not only hamper the personality of the teacher, but interfere with the spontaneity of the pupil. The problem of learning to read, and particularly the element of word-recognition, is an intellectual process, and, as such, may be guided by certain well-defined principles of psychology and logic. But literature makes its appeal chiefly through the imagination and the emotions, and these things are not subject to exact rules, as are matters of pure intellect.

Professor Laurie compares the inspiration of literature to that of religion and suggests the inefficacy of mere rules of procedure to bring about the desired results in either case.



"For in the domain of literature, as in that of religion, it may be said that rules of procedure, which may be of great use to a teacher in matters of pure intellect, are of little value unless he is himself inspired. The genuine love of literature, the sympathetic living with the growing minds of the young, and the impulse to give to others that which enriches your own life and which you further enrich yourself by giving, supersede all rules of method."\*

In fact, religion and literature are very much akin. We may not wish to go the length of Matthew Arnold and maintain that "the strongest part of our religion to-day is its unconscious poetry." But, viewing literature as art, we are certainly prepared to repeat with Ruskin: "All that is good in art is the expression of one soul talking to another, and it is precious according to the greatness of the soul that utters it." Surely this is akin to religion; as is also Wordsworth's definition of poetry as "the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge." This is the position we wish to take; and we would avoid ritual and dogma in literature as we would in the teaching of religion.

Furthermore, in literature, as in religion, the instructor must have more than a mere academic knowledge of his subject. We expect the teacher of religion to be so quickened and inspired by it that its spirit is to him as the natural atmosphere which he breathes; and we are inclined to sneer at and look down upon the instructor who presumes to teach religion without this essential qualification. We call

\*Laurie: *Lectures in Language*, Chap. VIII.

him hypocrite, and refuse to listen to his teaching. Unfortunately, the average parent and school principal has no such feelings of resentment towards the pretender in literature. Even an intelligent understanding of a selection to be presented to a class is sometimes lacking on the part of a teacher. And the average teacher, particularly of public school literature, has never concerned herself sufficiently with the subject to make a survey of the field in which she works. She labors on from day to day, without motive and without system, hearing the pupils read the selections contained in the authorized set of school readers, in the order of their occurrence, asking questions regarding the meanings of words and requiring the difficult ones to be "looked up" in the dictionary. There is no intelligent understanding of the meaning and content of child literature; much less that inspiration and spiritual response without which the teaching of literature is little short of pretence and hypocrisy.

These are strong words, and the picture painted is a dismal one. But, unfortunately, it is quite a literal representation of conditions as I have witnessed them scores, yea hundreds, of times. One teacher apparently expected a Grade III class to enter with enthusiasm into the spirit of Clement C. Moore's *Visit from St. Nicholas* on a sultry day in June, when the fable of the *Lazy Frog* would have been decidedly more appropriate. Celia Thaxter's *Song of Easter* was taught in the fall, and Sherman's *Golden Rod* in the spring! Extracts from novels,—mere mutilated fragmen

of stories, were read without reference to, or knowledge of the living organisms from which they were torn. Thus, *The Archery Contest* is taken from Chapter XIII of *Ivanhoe*, and *The Cruise of the Coracle* from Chapter XXIV of *Treasure Island*, "with a few slight changes and some omissions," evidently intended to improve upon the original versions, and incorporated into school readers, to be assigned by teachers as living unities for children's reading. In many cases the teachers themselves were innocent of the fact that these "lessons" are extracts from classic novels. One teacher-in-training, who had been admonished to have her pupils see these fragmentary bits in relation to the wholes from which they have been so ruthlessly torn, referred to extracts from *Gulliver's Travels* and *The Mill on the Floss*, by making the remarkable statement that she "would use the story of *Gulliver among the Gypsies* to serve as an introduction to the study of *Gulliver's Travels* by Dean Swift."

These incidents, from actual observations of teachers at work in the classroom, are narrated here with no desire to depreciate their efforts or underestimate their difficulties. They are given as concrete illustrations of existing conditions; and if weaknesses are exposed, it is solely with a desire to improve these conditions. It is with the same sympathetic understanding that I undertake to illustrate the fact that teachers do not always master the thought and spirit of a selection in literature before attempting to present it to a class; much less have they, as a rule, been baptized in the spirit of literature itself.

The selection was Browning's *Song from Pippa Passes*:

The year's at the spring  
And day's at the morn;  
Morning's at seven;  
The hillside's dew-pearled;  
The lark's on the wing;  
The snail's on the thorn:  
God's in his heaven—  
All's right with the world!

Undoubtedly, the teacher had not read Browning's delightful little drama, for one could not read it without catching the note of optimism, confidence, and love reflected in Pippa's song, so bright and refreshing as to banish crime and despair from the hearts of all who heard it. And the teacher actually explained to her class the line:

"The snail's on the thorn;"

by telling them that the butcher-bird had been about early that morning and had breakfasted upon snails so abundantly that his appetite was satisfied ere he came upon this particular victim. But, with characteristic foresight, he caught up the unlucky snail, impaled him on a thorn, and left him there in the sun to dry, that he might have him for dinner. Is it any wonder that the little child, who saw the whole thing from the poor snail's point of view, failed utterly to be convinced that all was right with the world!

Equally unresponsive to the spirit of literature was the teacher who grossly maltreated Gray's *Elegy*, as indicated in her presentation of the following stanza:

"Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,  
Their sober wishes never learned to stray:  
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life  
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way."

According to this teacher, the first line modifies the second; in spite of the fact that such an interpretation is directly contrary to the whole spirit of the poem, and is flatly contradicted in the following two lines of the stanza.

Another teacher, in presenting Browning's *Incident of the French Camp*, insisted that Napoleon stood by, smiling, while the young soldier died; and this, notwithstanding that the same stanza represented Napoleon showing for him the tender compassion of a mother-eagle when her bruised eaglet breathes.

With such illustrations before one, surely it is timely to urge upon teachers of literature the necessity of making careful preparation for their work, and developing a literary conscience, and particularly a sense of responsibility for the literary well-being of their pupils. A fine appreciation does not come without effort. It comes by reading and re-reading, and particularly reading aloud and memorizing the best that has been written by the masters of literature. "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing," says an oft-quoted maxim. It is the "little," and not the "knowledge," that is dangerous; for a little knowledge is the necessary basis for more knowledge. And, if the public school teacher realizes that she is not conversant with English literature, may she not be content to own the fact, but may she use the knowledge she has

as a basis for a fuller and deeper appreciation. "Familiarity breeds contempt," says another aphorism, even more pernicious in its doctrine than the one just quoted. Familiarity with falsehood leads to contempt; but familiarity with truth, and particularly the spiritual truth of literature and religion, leads to reverence and devotion.

The first qualification of the teacher of literature is, then, a rational understanding and a genuine love of the subject. These supersede all rules of method. Still there are certain principles of pedagogy which apply to all good teaching. Foremost among them is the psychological principle which reveals the process by which the mind naturally receives any new element, whether it be a piece of literature, a problem in mathematics, or a landscape:—First a vague, general apprehension of the thing as a whole; then an analysis of the whole into parts, and finally a synthesis of the parts resulting in a clear, definite COMPREHENSION of the whole. The length of the selection does not materially influence the general method of procedure. Whether it be a short lyric poem or ballad, or whether it be a long narrative poem, such as *The Lady of the Lake*, or a novel or a drama, it should be read from beginning to end, with the minimum amount of comment and explanation, in order that the pupil may get a general, vague conception of the meaning and spirit of the production as a whole. Whether the reading should be by teacher or pupil, or by both co-operatively, and whether it should take place in the school-room or be assigned for home study, or be read partly in school and

partly at home, all depend upon existing circumstances rather than principles of method.

The second step will consist in a general analysis of the selection into its outstanding natural divisions, each of which may be subject to a further analysis if the treatment warrants it. There is, however, a danger in over-analysis. In literature, as in everyday experience, the mind naturally carries the process only so far as is necessary for intelligent understanding. After the content and spirit of the selection have been mastered in so far as they appeal to the interests and capabilities of the reader, the selection is again viewed as a whole. But this view is very different from the first impression. The initial reading resulted in a mere apprehension of the content; the final reading presents a clear, definite comprehension of the author's purpose, together with an appreciation of his art.

This is the rational method of teaching literature, for it is in accordance with the way in which the mind works. The prevalent method of treating a poem or story by examining minute parts at close range, mastering thoroughly each verse or sentence before proceeding to the next, reminds one of a guide who would introduce a tourist to a piece of architecture by leading him, blindfolded, to a position immediately in front of the structure, and then, removing the bandages, require him to examine the individual bricks and stones by the aid of a magnifying glass or even a microscope. Needless to say, the stranger would never arrive at an appreciation of the artist's plan, nor be moved by the beauty

and grandeur of form and color. Obviously, the rational procedure would be to get a general view of the structure as a whole by surveying it from a distance; then upon closer approach, the dominant elements of which the whole is composed would be perceived in the order of their importance. If the subject of study were of particular interest to the observer, a further process of analysis would take place. A careful examination of one feature might even exclude, for the time being, any conscious picture of the whole; but a process of synthesis would naturally follow and the final view would be that of a complex unity.

The results of minute examination of words and phrases and figures of speech in literature, before the whole has been seen and loved, are even more disastrous than our illustration suggests. It is rather as if a beautiful flower were torn to pieces, or a living organism dissected and its organs and members displayed to view, in order to appreciate its beauty. Vivisection in the biological laboratory may be justified, for scientific purposes; but vivisection in literature is as absurd as it is cruel;—cruel, because the living entity is killed, so far as the child's appreciation of it is concerned; and absurd, because the end is defeated in the means employed.

Before closing our discussion of the mental process by which one perceives a piece of literature, there is a further aspect of perception which should be considered. My perceptions are my own private, individual possessions. They are formed in my own mind and combine with elements of my



own previous experience to form groups of ideas or "apperceptive masses." You cannot perceive for me nor I for you; each must act in this regard for himself. And, as your experience and mental equipment differ from mine, so your interpretation and appreciation of a piece of literature will differ from mine. I have no right to attempt to force my views upon you, though I may, with propriety, describe a thing to you as I see it, with the hope that I may enable you to see it more clearly. But I should be careful that my views do not interfere with your thought process instead of aiding it. At least I should recognize that you and I cannot possibly see the same thing in exactly the same light.

Now let us apply this principle to the teaching of literature. The child cannot see the selection through the teacher's eyes. He must see it for himself. And any attempt on the part of the teacher to force her own adult interpretation upon a child is apt to interfere with and frustrate the natural movement of his mind and prevent any intelligent appreciation of the selection.

Editors of literature selections for school use, and of teachers' helps generally, are frequently guilty of this same breach of etiquette and lack of understanding. The notes and annotations are often hindrances instead of helps, for they are written from the point of view of the highly-trained specialist, and are intended for the child. Professor James, commenting on such practices, loses his patience, even his temper, over the lack of respect, or lack of understanding, which editors frequently show in this regard, and refers to

them as high-priests of "the American 'text-book' Moloch, in whose belly living children's minds are turned to ashes, and whose ritual lies in text-books in which the science is pre-digested for the teacher by every expository artifice, and for the pupil comminuted into small print and large print, and paragraph headings, and cross references, and examination questions, and every other up-to-date device for frustrating the natural movement of the mind when reading, and preventing that irresponsible rumination of the material in one's *own* way which is the soul of culture."\*

Before concluding our discussion of method, a word regarding economy in memorizing may not be out of place, particularly since we argued in Chapter IV that children from eight to fourteen years of age are able to memorize from two thousand to three thousand lines of poetry and prose each year without effort. The common practice of memorizing by bits,—a line or verse at a time, involves a decided wastage of time, according to the scientific investigations of eminent psychologists. Miss Steffens, experimenting with Byron's *Childe Harold*, found that the stanza was a better unit than any division of it. It will be recollected that this poem is written in the imposing Spenserian Stanza form, one of the characteristics of which is that each stanza of nine rather ponderous lines is pretty much a complete unit of thought. Other investigators have tried to discover the length of passage which can best be memorized as a whole;

\*William James; in an introduction to Thorndike's *Elements of Psychology*.

and it is generally agreed that a unit which can be mastered in one sitting of forty minutes should not be memorized by piecemeal learning, but should be read over from beginning to end until it is learned. "If the selection is too long to be learned at one sitting of about 45 minutes, it will be most economical to read it clear through each time, and to devote 30 or 40 minutes to a sitting, the exact amount of time depending upon the condition of the learner."\*

The teacher of literature can verify the general results of these investigations for herself by setting some children in a class to memorize a poem, such as *The Village Blacksmith*, or *Lucy Gray*, by piecemeal learning, while other members of the same class learn it as a whole. The aggregate time required by a number of pupils memorizing by lines or stanzas, would then be compared with the aggregate time occupied by the same number of pupils, presumably of equal ability, memorizing the poem by reading it through from beginning to end without interruption. It would be well to compare results for persistency as well as for immediate memory, for it would no doubt be found that those who memorized the poem as a unit learned it more quickly, and retained it longer than those who memorized a fragment at a time.

#### BOOKS OF REFERENCE

Arnold: *Essays in Criticism*;—particularly *The Study of Poetry*.

\*See Sandiford: *Mental and Physical Life of School Children*, page 198.

Bacon: Essays; "Of Studies."

Chubb: The Teaching of English.

Hinsdale: Teaching the Language-Arts.

Laurie: Lectures on Language; Lecture VIII.

McMurray: Elements of General Method; Special Method  
in the Reading of English Classics.

Ruskin: Sesame and Lilies; Lecture I.

## APPENDIX A

### A LIST OF PRIMARY MEMORY GEMS FOR TEACHERS REFERENCE

This list is not complete, by any means; it is intended merely to be suggestive of appropriate types of material.

A.—Mother Goose Rhymes and Melodies. (See collection in *Everyman's Library*).

B.—At least the following from *A Child's Garden of Verses*:

The world is so full of a number of things,  
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.

---

Happy hearts and happy faces,  
Happy play in grassy places—  
That was how in ancient ages,  
Children grew to kings and sages.

---

It is very nice to think  
The world is full of meat and drink,  
With little children saying grace  
In every Christian kind of place.

---

The rain is raining all around,  
It falls on field and tree,

It rains on the umbrellas here,  
And on the ships at sea.  
Of speckled eggs the birdy sings  
And nests among the trees;  
The sailor sings of ropes and things  
In ships upon the seas.

---

The children sing in far Japan,  
The children sing in Spain;  
The organ with the organ man  
Is singing in the rain.

---

Sing a song of seasons!  
Something bright in all!  
Flowers in the summer,  
Fires in the fall!

---

When I was down beside the sea  
A wooden spade they gave to me  
To dig the sandy shore.  
My holes were empty like a cup,  
In every hole the sea came up,  
Till it could come no more.

---

I saw you toss the kites on high  
And blow the birds about the sky;  
And all around I heard you pass,  
Like ladies' skirts across the grass—  
O wind, a-blowing all day long,  
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

---

I saw the different things you did,  
But always you yourself you hid,

I felt you push, I heard you call,  
I could not see yourself at all—  
O wind, a-blowing all day long,  
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

---

C.—At least the following from Rossetti's *Sing Song*:

Who has seen the wind?  
Neither I nor you:  
But when the leaves hang trembling  
The wind is passing thro'.

Who has seen the wind?  
Neither you nor I:  
But when the trees bow down their heads  
The wind is passing by.

---

Oh wind, why do you never rest,  
Wandering, whistling to and fro,  
Bringing rain out of the West,  
From the dim North bringing snow?

---

On the grassy banks  
Lambkins at their pranks;  
Woolly sisters, woolly brothers,  
Jumping off their feet,  
While their woolly mothers  
Watch by them and bleat.

---

The days are clear,  
Day after day,  
When April's here,  
That leads to May,

And June  
Must follow soon :  
    Stay, June, stay !—  
If only we could stop the moon  
    And June !

---

Mother shake the cherry-tree,  
    Susan catch a cherry ;  
Oh how funny that will be,  
    Let's be merry !  
One for brother, one for sister,  
    Two for Mother more,  
Six for Father, hot and tired,  
    Knocking at the door.

---

Three plum buns  
    To eat here at the stile  
In the clover meadow,  
    For we have walked a mile.  
One for you and one for me,  
    And one left over ;  
Give it to the boy who shouts  
    To scare sheep from the clover.

---

When the cows come home the milk is coming,  
Honey's made while the bees are humming ;  
Duck and drake on the rushy lake,  
And the deer live safe in the breezy brake ;  
And timid, funny, brisk little bunny  
Winks his nose and sits all sunny.

D.—A sprinkling of fun and nonsense such as the following :



I.—A few of Lear's *Limericks*:

There was an old man in a tree,  
Who was horribly bored by a Bee;  
When they said, "Does it buzz?"  
He replied, "Yes, it does!"  
"It's a regular brute of a Bee!"

---

There was an old man who said, "How,—  
Shall I flee from this horrible Cow?  
I will sit on this stile  
And continue to smile,  
Which may soften the heart of that Cow."

---

There was an old man who said, "Hush!  
I perceive a young bird in this bush!"  
When they said—"Is it small?"  
He replied—"Not at all!"  
It is four times as big as the bush!"

---

There was an old man with a beard,  
Who said, "It is just as I feared!—  
Two Owls and a Hen,  
Four Larks and a Wren,  
Have all built their nests in my beard!"

---

## II.—Other Limericks:

There was a young lady of Niger  
Who smiled as she rode on a Tiger;  
They came back from the ride  
With the lady inside,  
And the smile on the face of the Tiger.

There was a young maid who said, Why  
Can't I look in my ear with my eye?  
If I give my mind to it,  
I'm sure I can do it—  
You never can tell till you try."

---

There was a small boy of Quebec,  
Who was buried in snow to his neck;  
When they said, "Are you friz?  
He replied, "Yes, I is—  
But we don't call this cold in Quebec."

---

III.—A few nonsense verses with fun and music:

'Tis when the wind is rushing by  
To chase the clouds across the sky,  
The waves put on their nice white caps  
To keep from catching cold, perhaps.

---

Bees don't care about the snow;  
I can tell you why that's so:  
Once I caught a little bee,  
Who was much too warm for me!

---

When coming down the nursery stair,  
Suppose that I should meet a bear;—  
I think I'd try to be polite,  
And say, "Nice Mr. Bear, Good-night!"  
And then I'm sure he would not bite.

---

Would you think it? Spring has come;  
Winter's paid his passage home;  
Packed his ice-box, gone half way  
To the Arctic pole, they say.

Monday's child is fair of face,  
Tuesday's child is full of grace,  
Wednesday's child is full of woe,  
Thursday's child has far to go,  
Friday's child is loving and giving,  
Saturday's child works hard for its living;  
But a child that is born on a Sabbath day  
Is fair and wise and good and gay.

---

They that wash on Monday  
Have all the week to dry;  
They that wash on Tuesday  
Are not so much awry;  
They that wash on Wednesday  
Are not so much to blame;  
They that wash on Thursday  
Wash for very shame;  
They that wash on Friday  
Must only wash in need;  
They that wash on Saturday  
Are lazy folk indeed.

---

The Bumble Bee, the Bumble Bee!  
He flew to the top of the Tulip-Tree.  
He flew to the top,  
But he could not stop,  
For he had to get home to his early tea.  
The Bumble Bee, the Bumble Bee!  
He flew from the top of the Tulip-Tree;  
But he made a mistake,  
And flew into the lake,  
And he never got home to his early tea.

## E.—Miscellaneous gems :

Twinkle, twinkle little star ;  
How I wonder what you are !  
Up above the world so high,  
Like a diamond in the sky.  
When the blazing sun is gone,  
When he nothing shines upon,  
Then you show your little light,  
Twinkle, twinkle all the night.

---

I like the little friendly stars  
With faces small and bright,  
Who look into my nursery  
And watch me through the night.  
And when I waken in the night,  
How lonesome it would be  
If their kind faces were not there,  
To smile and blink at me.

---

At evening when I go to bed,  
I see the stars shine over head ;  
They are the little daisies white,  
That dot the meadows of the night.  
And often when I'm dreaming so  
Across the sky the moon will go ;  
She is a lady, sweet and fair,  
Who comes to gather daisies there.  
For when at morning I arise,  
There's not a star left in the skies ;  
She has picked them all and dropped them down  
Into the meadows of the town.

Blue are the meadows of the sky ;  
The sheep are the clouds of white ;  
The stars are the eyes of the little lambs,  
That wink at us at night.

---

A million little diamonds twinkled in the trees,  
And all the little maidens cried, "A Jewel,  
if you please!"  
But while they held their hands outstretched  
to catch the diamonds gay,  
A million little sunbeams came, and stole  
them all away.

---

Little drop of dew,  
Like a gem you are ;  
I believe that you  
Must have been a star.  
When the day is bright,  
On the grass you lie ;  
Tell me then, at night  
Are you in the sky ?

---

White clouds, white clouds, in the blue sky,  
When the wind blows you go floating by.  
When the wind stops you all stand still,  
Like pretty white sheep, on a blue hill.

---

Plump little baby clouds,  
Dimpled and soft,  
Rock in thin air cradles,  
Swinging aloft.  
Great snowy mother clouds,  
Broad bosoms white,

Watch o'er the baby clouds  
Slumbering light.  
Tired little baby clouds,  
Dreaming of fears,  
Turn in their air cradles,  
Dropping soft tears.

---

Each little flower holds up  
A dainty cup  
To catch the rain and dew;  
The drink of flowers  
That comes in showers  
Is just the drink for you.

---

How beautiful is the rain!  
After the dust and heat,  
In the broad and fiery street,  
In the narrow lane,  
How beautiful is the rain!

---

If all were rain and never sun,  
No bow could span the hill;  
If all were sun and never rain,  
There'd be no rainbow still.

---

The trees have lost their pretty leaves,  
The flowers are sleeping too;  
And through the woods the cold north wind  
Goes calling—oo—ooo—oooo—.

---

The frost is here  
And fuel is dear,  
And woods are sear,

And fires burn clear,  
And frost is here  
And has bitten the heel of the going year.

---

Good-night little shivering grasses!  
'Tis idle to struggle and fight  
With tempest and cruel frost fingers;  
Lie down; little grasses, to-night.  
Good-night little shivering grasses!  
Lie down 'neath the coverlet white,  
And rest till the cuckoo is singing;  
Good-night, little grasses, good-night!

---

O there is a little artist  
Who paints in the cold night hours,  
Pictures for little children  
Of wonderful trees and flowers;  
The moon is the lamp he paints by,  
His canvas the window-pane;  
His brush is a frozen snow-flake,  
Jack Frost is the artist's name.

---

Out of the bosom of the air,  
Over the woodlands brown and bare,  
Over the harvest fields forsaken,  
Silent, and soft, and slow,  
Descends the snow.

---

Where do all the daisies go?  
I know, I know!  
Underneath the snow they creep,  
Nod their little heads and sleep,  
In the springtime up they peep;  
That is where they go!

Where do all the birdies go?  
I know, I know!  
Far away from winter snow  
To the fair warm South they go;  
There they stay till daisies blow,  
That is where they go!

---

In spring when stirs the wind, I know  
That soon the crocus buds will show;  
For 'tis the wind that bids them wake  
And into pretty blossoms break.

---

"Were it not for me,"  
Said a chickadee  
"Not a single flower on earth would be;  
For under the ground they soundly sleep,  
And never venture an upward peep,  
Till they hear from me,  
Chicadee—dee—dee!"

---

Dainty little dandelion,  
Smiling on the lawn,  
Sleeping through the dewy night,  
Waking with the dawn.  
Fairy little dandelion  
In her misty shroud,  
Passes from our sight away,  
Like a summer cloud.

---

There surely is a gold mine somewhere  
Down beneath the grass  
For dandelions are popping up  
In every place you pass;



But if you want to gather some,  
You'd better not delay,  
For the gold will turn to silver soon,  
And then will blow away.

---

There was a pretty dandelion  
With lovely fluffy hair,  
That glistened in the sunshine  
And in the summer air.  
But Oh! this pretty dandelion  
Soon grew quite old and gray:  
And sad to tell, her charming hair  
Blew many miles away.

---

Oh, dandelion, yellow as gold,  
What do you do all day?  
I just wait here in the long green grass  
Till the children come and play.  
Oh, dandelion, yellow as gold,  
What do you do all night?  
I wait and wait till the cool dew falls,  
And my hair is long and white.

---

The friendly cow all red and white,  
I love with all my heart:  
She gives me cream with all her might,  
To eat with apple-tart.  
She wanders lowing here and there,  
And yet she cannot stray,  
All in the pleasant open air,  
The pleasant light of day;

And blown by all the winds that pass  
And wet with all the showers,  
She walks among the meadow grass  
And eats the meadow flowers.—*Stevenson.*

---

Thank you, pretty cow, that made  
Pleasant milk to soak my bread,  
Every day and every night,  
Warm, and fresh, and sweet, and white.  
Do not chew the hemlock rank,  
Growing on the weedy bank;  
But the yellow cowslip eat,  
That will make it very sweet.  
Where the purple violet grows,  
Where the bubbling water flows,  
Where the grass is fresh and fine,  
Pretty cow, go there and dine.—*Jane Taylor.*

---

Brownie, Brownie, let down your milk  
White as swansdown and smooth as silk,  
Fresh as dew and pure as snow:  
For I know where the cowslips blow,  
And you shall have a cowslip wreath,  
No sweeter scented than your breath.—*Rossetti.*

---

Slumber, slumber little one, now  
The bird is asleep in his nest on the bough;  
The bird is asleep, he has folded his wings,  
And over him softly the dream fairy sings:  
Lullaby, lullaby—lullaby!  
Pearls in the deep—  
Stars in the sky,  
Dreams in our sleep;  
So lullaby!

Hush little one, and fold your hands—  
The sun hath set, the moon is high ;  
The sea is singing to the sands,  
And wakeful posies are beguiled  
By many a fairy lullaby—  
Hush, little child—my little child!

---

The dear little, queer little noise that you hear,  
As you lie down to sleep in the twilight, my dear,  
Is the faint little, quaint little step of a dream,  
As it climbs to your bed on a silver moon-beam.

---

Little baby, lay your head  
On your pretty trundle-bed ;  
Shut your eye-peeps, now the day  
And the light are gone away ;  
All the clothes are tucked in tight ;  
Little baby dear, good-night.

---

Now the day is over,  
Night is drawing nigh,  
Shadows of the evening  
Steal across the sky.  
Now the darkness gathers,  
Stars begin to peep,  
Birds and beasts and flowers  
Soon will be asleep.  
Jesu, give the weary  
Calm and sweet repose ;  
With thy tenderest blessing  
May our eyelids close.

The inner side of every cloud  
Is always bright and shining;  
And so I turn my clouds about,  
And a'ways wear them inside out,  
To show the silver lining.

---

The year's at the spring  
And day's at the morn;  
Morning's at seven;  
The hillside's dew-pearled;  
The lark's on the wing;  
The snail's on the thorn:  
God's in his heaven—  
All's right with the world.

# APPENDIX B

## THE CURRICULUM OF THE HORACE MANN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

### TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

#### 1917

#### \*OUTLINE OF WORK IN READING AND LITERATURE

#### FIRST GRADE

#### READING MATERIAL

Primer .....	Free and Treadwell
First Reader .....	Free and Treadwell
First Reader .....	Edson-Laing
Story Hour Reader, First Reader...	Coe and Christie
Child-Lore Dramatic Reader...	Bryce
Tommy Tinker's Book .....	} Blaisdell
Twilight Town .....	
Caldecott Picture Book .....	
Mother Goose .....	

#### POEMS STUDIED

Bed in Summer .....	} Stevenson
Windy Nights .....	
What Does Little Birdie Say	Tennyson
Sleep, Baby Sleep .....	German Lullaby

\*Note that school readers are practically abolished from the senior grades; that in the primary grades five or six readers may be used in one grade in addition to a wealth of material in story and verse.

Note also that the course extends over a period of six years only.

The Snow Bird .....	} Frank Dempster Sherman
Daisies .....	
My Shadow .....	
The Cow .....	} Stevenson
The Swing .....	
Singing .....	
The Wind .....	Christina Rossetti
Over the Meadow .....	Olive A. Wadsworth
Who Stole the Bird's Nest?..	Lydia Maria Child
Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star..	Jane Taylor

## STORIES TOLD BY THE TEACHER

Sleeping Beauty .....	Grimm
The Musicians of Bremen ....	Grimm
The Discontented Tree .....	Andersen
The Three Pigs .....	} Green Fairy Book, Lang
The Three Bears .....	
The Half Chick .....	
Little Red Riding Hood .....	Blue Fairy Book, Lang
The Hare and the Tortoise ....	} Aesop
The Boy and the Wolf .....	
The Dog and His Shadow ....	
The Sun and the Wind .....	} Stories to Tell to Children
The Lion and the Mouse .....	
The Elves and the Shoemaker..	
The Gingerbread Man .....	} Sara Cone Bryant
The Hen and the Grain of Wheat .....	
Another Little Red Hen .....	
The Pied Piper of Hamelin ....	} How to Tell Stories to Children.
Why the Trees Keep their Leaves all Winter .....	
The Old Woman and her Pig ..	
Epaminondas and his Auntie ..	} Sara Cone Bryant
The Wheat Field .....	
Pig Brother .....	
The North Wind .....	} Laura E. Richards
Santa Claus and the Mouse ....	
The Christ Child .....	
Piccola .....	} The Child's World, Poulsson
Prince Harweda .....	
Raggylug .....	
Chicken Little .....	} Story Hour, Kate Douglas Wiggin
Three Little Goats Gruff .....	
	Story Hour, Harrison
	Ernest Thompson-Seton
	Child Life, Second Reader
	Graded Literature Readers, First Book.

- The Origin of the Winds . . . . Smithsonian Report  
 (Eskimo Story)  
 Peggie's Garden and What  
 Grew Therein . . . . . Celia Thaxter .

## SECOND GRADE

## READING MATERIAL

- Edson-Laing Reader . . . . . Book Two  
 The Progressive Road to  
 Reading . . . . . Burchill, Ettinger and Shimer  
 Second Reader . . . . . Harvey and Hix  
 Story Hour Reader, Second  
 Reader . . . . . Coe and Christie  
 Merry Animal Tales . . . . . Bigham  
 Second Reader . . . . . Free and Treadwell  
 Hiawatha (selections) . . . . . Longfellow  
 Robinson Crusoe . . . . . Defoe  
 The Dutch Twins . . . . . Lucy Fitch Perkins  
 Children's First Book of Poetry . . . . . Emilie Kip Baker

## POEMS STUDIED

- Blow, Wind, Blow . . . . . James Whitcomb Riley  
 The Owl . . . . . Tennyson  
 Where Go the Boats . . . . . Stevenson  
 Gaelic Lullaby . . . . . Unknown  
 The Duel . . . . . Eugene Field  
 The Sun's Travels . . . . .  
 Foreign Children . . . . . } Stevenson  
 The Elf-Man . . . . . } John Kendrick Bangs  
 A Day . . . . . } Emily Dickinson  
 Thanksgiving Fable . . . . .  
 The Elf and the Dormouse . . . . .  
 The Rainbow . . . . .  
 The Firefly . . . . . } Oliver Herford  
 The Moon . . . . . }  
 The Owls . . . . . }  
 Sleep Song . . . . . Longfellow's Hiawatha  
 Indian Mother's Lullaby . . . . . Charles Myall  
 Lullaby of the Iroquois . . . . . Unknown

## STORIES TOLD OR READ BY THE TEACHER

- Phaeton—Sun God . . . . .  
 Baucis and Philemon . . . . . } Stories of Old Greece, Firth  
 David and Goliath . . . . . }  
 Christmas Story . . . . . } Bible

The Fire Bringer .....	Sara Cone Bryant
The Story of the Little Tavwots	
How Brother Rabbit Fooled the Whale and Mr. Elephant	
The Little Jackal and the Alligator .....	
Billy Beg and his Bull .....	
Rumpelstiltskin .....	Andersen
The Fir Tree .....	
Ugly Duckling .....	
Little Maia .....	Shonberg Cotta Family (adapted)
Legend of St. Christopher ...	
The Legend of Arbutus .....	Children's Hour, Bailey and Lewis
Cinderella .....	Grimm
Little One Eye .....	
The Twelve Brothers .....	
Hans in Luck .....	
Hansel and Gretel .....	
Mother Holle .....	
The Queen Bee .....	Short Stories, Laura Richards
The Golden Windows .....	
Jamie's Lesson .....	Aesop
The Crow and the Pitcher ....	
The Man, the Boy, and the Donkey .....	Macdonald
The Princess and the Goblin..	
The Hero of Haarlem .....	

## THIRD GRADE

## READING MATERIAL

Story Hour Third Reader ....	Coe and Christie
Edson-Laing Reader .....	Book Three
Third Reader .....	Hervey and Hix
Pinocchio .....	Collodi
Alice in Wonderland .....	Lewis Carroll
In the Days of Giants .....	Abbey Farwell Brown
Animal Folk Tales .....	Anna Stanley
Adventures of a Brownie .....	Dinah Mulock Craik
Children's First Book of Poetry	Emilie Kip Baker

## POEMS STUDIED

Psalm XXIII .....	Bible
The Land of Story Books .....	Stevenson
A Visit from St. Nicholas .....	Moore
The Children's Hour .....	Longfellow



Wynken, Blynken, and Nod ..	Eugene Field
Fairy Folk .....	William Allingham
Thanksgiving Day .....	Lydia Maria Child
Seven Times One .....	Jean Ingelow
Good-night and Good-morning	Lord Houghton
Wild Geese .....	Celia Thaxter
Romance .....	Gabriel Setoun
One, Two, Three .....	H. C. Bunner
Cloud Sheep .....	Clinton Scollard
October .....	Helen Hunt Jackson
Japanese Lullaby .....	Eugene Field

## STORIES TOLD OR READ BY THE TEACHER

The Story of Joseph .....	Bible
Arachne .....	} Mythland, Beckwith
Ares .....	
Snow-White and the Seven Dwarfs .....	Grimm
The Stag .....	} Sara Cone Bryant
The Golden Cobweb .....	
The Endless Tale .....	} Fifty Famous Stories, Bald-
The Wise Men of Gotham ...	
King Alfred Stories .....	win
Rikki-Tiki-Tavi .....	} Kipling
Just So Stories .....	
Lobo .....	Ernest Thompson-Seton
The Bear Story .....	James Whitcomb Riley
Uncle Remus (selections) ....	Joel Chandler Harris
The Christmas Angel .....	Katharine Pyle
The Peterkin Papers .....	Lucretia Hale
Da ydowndilly .....	Hawthorne

## FOURTH GRADE

## SELECTIONS READ AND STUDIED

Psalm C .....	Bible
America .....	Samuel Smith
Seal's Lullaby .....	Kipling
The Night Wind .....	Eugene Field
September .....	Helen Hunt Jackson
Song of the River .....	Kingsley
Norse Lullaby .....	} Eugene Field
Seein' Things at Night .....	
The Camel's Hump .....	Kipling
The Bell of Atri .....	} Longfellow
The Village Blacksmith .....	

Out of the Morning .....	Emily Dickinson
Fern Song .....	John Tabb
St. Luke II: 8-14 .....	Bible
The Pied Piper of Hamelin ....	Browning
King of the Golden River ....	Ruskin
Water Babies .....	Kingsley
Child Classics—Third Book ....	Alexander
Fourth Year Language Book..	Baker-Carpenter

## STORIES TOLD OR READ BY THE TEACHER

Daniel in the Lion's Den ....	Bible
The Wanderings of Ulysses..	Lamb
(selections)	
Damon and Pythias .....	Ethics for Children, Ella Ly-
	man Cabot
The Gulf in the Forum .....	Livy—Adapted
Quiquern .....	Jungle Book, Kipling
White Seal .....	
Uncle Remus (selections) ....	Joel Chandler Harris
The King of the Birds .....	Grimm
Faithful John .....	
The Seven Ravens .....	
What the Good Man Does is	
Right .....	Anderson
The Crab and his Mother ....	Aesop
Bruce and the Spider .....	Scott
Diddle Dumps and Tot .....	Pynelle
Robin Hood Stories .....	Pyle and others
Robert of Sicily .....	Sara Cone Bryant
Typical Stories from the life	
of Lincoln .....	
The Patient Cat .....	Laura E. Richards

## FIFTH GRADE

## SELECTIONS READ AND STUDIED

Psalm XXIV .....	Bible
Abou Ben Adhem .....	Leigh Hunt
The Charge of the Light	
Brigade .....	Tennyson
The Sandpiper .....	Celia Thaxter
Birds of Killingworth .....	Longfellow
Paul Revere's Ride .....	
Lochinvar .....	Scott

The Brook .....	} Tennyson
The Eagle .....	
The Song Sparrow .....	Van Dyke
The Voice of Spring .....	Felicia Hemans
The Farm-yard Song .....	Trowbridge
The Inchcape Rock .....	Southey
Daffodils .....	Wordsworth
The Corn Song .....	Whittier
Yussouf .....	Lowell
Riverside Fourth Reader .....	Van Sickle and Seegmiller
Fifth Year Language Reader ..	Baker and Carpenter
Heidi .....	Spiri
Wonder Book .....	} Hawthorne
Tanglewood Tales .....	

## STORIES TOLD OR READ BY THE TEACHER

David and Goliath .....	} Bible
David and Jonathan .....	
David and Saul .....	
Merry Adventures of Robin Hood .....	
King Arthur Stories (Selections)	Howard Pyle
The Wonderful Adventures of Nils .....	Selma Lagerlof
The Bird's Christmas Carol.. (Selections)	Wiggin
Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp .....	Arabian Nights
The Cat that Walked by Himself .....	Just So Stories, Kipling
William Tell .....	Child Classics, Knowles
Moni, the Goat Boy .....	} Spiri
The Little Runaway .....	
The Mouse and the Moonbeam	Field
The Dog of Flanders .....	Ouida

## SIXTH GRADE

## SELECTIONS READ AND STUDIED

Psalm CXXI .....	Bible
The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers .....	Hemans
The Sea .....	Barry Cornwall
Patriotism .....	Scott
Opportunity .....	Edward Rowland Sill

King Robert of Sicily .....	} Longfellow
The Skeleton in Armor .....	
Courtship of Miles Standish..	} Longfellow
How they Brought the	
Good News from Ghent	} Browning
to Aix .....	
Incident of the French Camp	} Charles Mackay
Tubal Cain .....	
Auld Lang Syne .....	} Burns
My Heart's in the Highlands ..	
O Captain, My Captain .....	} Whitman
Columbus .....	
Old Ironsides .....	} Joaquin Miller
The Overland Mail .....	
Snowbound (selections) .....	} Holmes
Gettysburg Address .....	
Kipling .....	} Kipling
Stevenson .....	
Riley .....	} Selections chosen from these
Horatius .....	
Rip Van Winkle .....	} authors.
Legend of Sleepy Hollow ....	
Treasure Island .....	} Macaulay
Riverside Fifth Reader .....	
	} Irving
	} Stevenson
	} Van Sickle and Seegmiller

## STORIES TOLD OR READ BY THE TEACHER

The Story of Ruth .....	Bible
The Three Questions .....	Twenty-three Tales, Tolstoi
The Great Stone Face .....	Hawthorne
Sir Galahad .....	Tennyson
Sinbad the Sailor .....	Arabian Nights
The Griffin and the Minor	} Fanciful Tales, Stockton
Canon .....	
The Merry Adventures of	} Howard Pyle
Robin Hood .....	
The Ship that Found Herself..	} The Day's Work, Kipling
The Perfect Tribute .....	
Story of Jean Valjean .....	} Mary Shipman Andrews
The Christmas Carol .....	
Grandmother's Story of	} Victor Hugo
Bunker Hill .....	
	} Dickens
	} Oliver Wendell Holmes

